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NARRATIVE OF A CAMPAIGN

AGAINST THE

KABAÏLES OF ALGERIA.

LONDON:
SPOTTISWOODE and SHAW,
New-street-Square.

NARRATIVE OF A CAMPAIGN

AGAINST THE

KABAÏLES OF ALGERIA:

WITH

THE MISSION OF M. SUCHET

TO THE

EMIR ABD-EL-KADER

FOR AN EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.

BY

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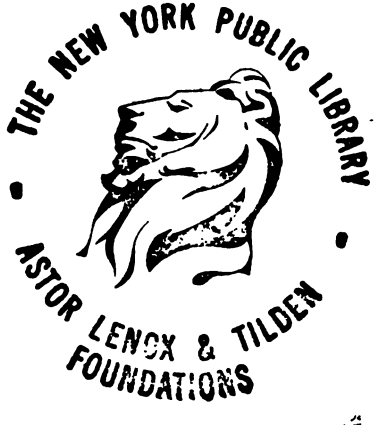
"A JOURNEY FROM NAPLES TO JERUSALEM."

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1848.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PREFACE.

WITH regard to any strictures contained in this little work upon the administrative system pursued within the colony of Algeria, it will be found by those who will examine a few of the countless brochures annually issuing from the French press, upon Algeria its present state and future prospects, that the few remarks I have ventured to make are not by any means adverse to the general opinion of those most interested in the welfare of the colony.

I cannot allow the following pages to go forth without expressing my sincere thanks to ROBERT ST. JOHN, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General in Algeria, for the many and kind attentions shown to me by himself and his family during my seventeen months' residence in the colony.

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A

SIX WEEKS' CAMPAIGN

IN THE

KABYLIE OF ALGERIA.

CHAPTER I.

THE "KABYLIE."—SOCIAL CHARACTER OF THE KABAÏLES.—MODE OF LIFE.—DRESS.—LANGUAGE.—GOVERNMENT.—DISTINCT RACE.—MARKETS.—OBJECT OF THE EXPEDITION.—THE KABAÏLES A VICIOUS RACE.

It may not, perhaps, be generally known that all the mountaineers of Algeria come under the appellation "Kabaïles," or "Djebalis," names derived from the words "Kabaïl" (a tribe), and "Djebel" (a mountain); but the portion of the country called, *par excellence*, the "Kabylie" by the French is usually considered as confined to that wild mountainous district, forming a stern barrier between the provinces of Algiers and Constantine, and being, in fact, a ramification of the chain of the Little Atlas, which, after running parallel with the sea-coast throughout Algeria, inclines (about 30

leagues south-east of the city of Algiers) S. S. East, throwing out at the same point a series of exceedingly lofty mountains, the most elevated of which is the vast ridge of the "Djurjura" (the "*Mons Ferratus*" of the ancients), which gives its name to the greatest part of the mountainous district above referred to. The northern extremity of this almost inaccessible region, laved by the waters of the Mediterranean, may be said to present a sea-face extending 60 or 70 leagues, computing its commencement on the Algiers side to be at about 17 leagues to the East of that port; its depth, extending inland, varying from 20 to 40 leagues, and in breadth being considered to extend from the eastern limit of the great plain of the Metidja to the port of Philippeville. But the exact limits of the "Kabylie" being but very uncertainly defined, this must be regarded as a mere rough statement of its extent. Almost the whole of this vast territory has as yet preserved its independence; though some of the most exposed tribes have yielded submission, or a *nominal* submission, to the French, who, after many a severe struggle with the natives, have succeeded in establishing military posts at Dellys, Bougie, and Jigelli, along the coast. The population of the Kabylie is considerable, it being calculated that there are not less than

80,000 fighting men within the limits above given.

Regarding the character and social condition of the very ancient and peculiar race which hold these rugged fastnesses of Algeria, they delight in a sedentary life, inhabiting in some parts huts of mud and turf, or of rough stones, and in others solidly and well-constructed villages. They are industrious in the highest degree, cultivating with great care the valleys and slopes of their mountain home, and fabricating their own agricultural instruments, arms, gunpowder, haïks, carpets, leather, and other articles of manual industry. This distaste to a wandering life, this disposition for labour and skill in agriculture and manufactures, might be supposed to render these mountain clans more open to the advance of civilisation than the nomad tribes of the plain; but the Kabaïle inherits a profound aversion and contempt for all strangers not of his own race, whether Mahommetan or "Infidel."

The mode of life of this remarkable race is simple and frugal; their chief nourishment consisting of a kind of pancake (called galette), baked upon a plate of clay, milk, butter, honey, and figs soaked in oil, of which latter article they make and consume immense quantities. Their luxuries are meat, and a national dish

called cous-coussou; the mode of making which is this: — they place upon the fire an earthen pot, containing grease or oil, tomatoes, onions, capsicums cut in small strips or pounded, aromatic herbs, and some pieces of meat or a fowl; above this well-filled pot is placed a flat dish of clay pierced with small holes, and filled with crumbs of dried paste of wheat flour rubbed into grains by the hand; now, the vapour of the pot below, passing through the holes of the dish above, causes its contents to become fat, unctuous, and grateful to the palate. As soon as cooked, the whole is placed in a large and shallow wooden vase supported by a pedestal of about a foot high, the meat being laid upon the summit of the goodly pyramid of farinaceous food. The signal given, and the "Bismillah" said, all gather round cross-legged upon the ground, and by turns dip their hands into the dish in the centre, each one tearing the meat into smaller fragments with his fingers. The Kabaïle's wardrobe consists of the "khandoura," a kind of woollen shirt with large loose sleeves, and the "burnoose," a white or black-and-white woollen mantle with a large hood. None but the very poorest are without this latter garment: it is worn night and day, summer and winter, and is handed down from generation to generation,

until perfectly reduced by the ravages of time and filth. Like Masinissa of old, the Kabyle generally marches with his head bare; and when the feet are not so they are merely covered with a slight sandal of hide, whilst a kind of buskin of strips of the same is often worn upon the leg.

These wild mountaineers, excepting in religious tenets, have nothing in common with the tribes of the plain in character, customs, or institutions: again, their language is altogether distinct from the Arabic, they speaking only the Showiah or Shilha tongue, the ancient Berber signification of which is said to be "the free or noble speech." Their form of government is purely democratic, whereas that of the Arab is as purely aristocratic. The chiefs or "Amims" of their tribes become so by election, and not by right of blood, and are frequently deposed without form or ceremony: their authority, whilst in power, is but small, the influence of the "Marabbuts," or saints, being far greater, and regulated according to the extent of the renown they may have for working miracles, or for the austerity of their lives. Each tribe forming a little republic, continual feuds arise between them, giving birth to inveterate hostilities; which, however, upon the approach of a common enemy, and that, above all, of a "Christian" host, are stifled for a time, that

all may unite in defence of their country: for the paramount feeling of this fierce race is devout love for their mountain homes, and a no less devout hatred for all that tends to interfere with their independence.

The last words of advice relating to these tribes given by Hussein Dey to the French, after deposing the reins of government over the Regency of Algiers, are worthy of record. "As for the Kabaïles, they have always detested strangers; they moreover detest one another. Avoid a general war with this people, warlike as numerous; you will derive little advantage from it: adopt with regard to them the policy constantly pursued by the Deys of Algiers; encourage their divisions, and profit by their quarrels." Marshal Bugeaud, in speaking of the Kabaïles in the French Chambers some time back, says, "Les populations de la Kabylie ne sont ni évahissantes, ni hostiles; elles se defendent vigoureusement quand on va chez elles, mais elles n'attaquent pas." And again, in a brochure published by him only a few years ago, "Les Kabaïles sont nombreux et tres-guerriers; ils ont des villages, et leur culture est sédentaire; il ya déjà pour eux trop peu de terre cultivable; il n'y a donc pas place pour les Européens dans les montagnes Kabyles,

et ils y feraient une bien triste figure." That the exposed tribes have a dread of the power of the present possessors of Algeria, is shown in some measure by the characteristic answer of the " Bit el Crikh ben-Abd-er-Rhaman " to the Emir, Abd-el-Kader, when, in 1845, he applied to them for hospitality for himself and followers. "We would wish to yield you that hospitality so pleasing to the great God; but the Christian is powerful. We have this year cultivated certain tracts upon the plains of Boghni and of Hamza: our works of husbandry are there considerable. The Christian will come up to burn our crops; what shall we then say to the poor and the needy, who look to us for their sustenance? Behold, it is our duty to refuse your demand, and we do refuse!" This was a response denoting a happy combination of temporal and spiritual interest.

Algeria being thus divided, as it were, into two distinct zones, inhabited by two races as distinct, viz. the *Arab* and the *Kabyle*, and France not having yet subdued the former, or colonized to any extent the zone occupied by them, and yet being at the same time grievously embarrassed with what she has subdued and colonized, public opinion has loudly and frequently exclaimed against entering upon hos-

tilities with the inhabitants of the other zone. Pacific relations might have been entered into with the Kabaïles, and such would probably in course of time have brought about a more surely-founded submission than force of arms is likely to do. During the first years of the French occupation, that retired race showed great shyness in entering into any commercial or other relation with the French; but lately signs of increasing disposition to carry on an exchange of produce has been shown, several of the markets having been attended by Kabaïles to a far greater extent than before; and in the month of March of 1846, during my residence at Algiers, a considerable caravan, attended by individuals of the great tribe of "Zouaoua" and the "Sidi-el-Djoudi," entered the city, bringing oil, figs, raisins, olives, goat-skins, burnooses, haïks &c., taking in exchange cloths, cottons, silk handkerchiefs, flannels, threads, needles, pins, mirrors, cutlery, glass, coral, ornaments for women, spicery, sugar, coffee, &c., together with quantities of iron and steel. And many of the most destitute of this race have even found employment in the city as porters, makers and sellers of mortar, &c.

The general and perhaps well-founded opinion is, that if these people were left in peace and

tranquillity, enticed by the manufactures and commerce of the French, they would soon be led to enter into more extensive relations with them, and, in course of time, become more ready to acknowledge their supremacy; but that if roused to arms, fuel being added to that fiery hatred which they naturally have for all strangers, especially "Christians," they will prove an eternal drain to French blood and treasure.

One of the views, indeed the chief object, in undertaking the late expedition into the Kabylie, was stated to be that of opening a communication by land between Algiers, Bougie, and Setif, the only communication at present being by sea: but there is no crying necessity at present for this, for the colony is not sufficiently advanced to require it; and, if it were, there is little doubt that that object might have been effected without having recourse to arms.

The abominable vices and debaucheries of the Kabyle race, the inhuman barbarities they are continually guilty of towards such as may be cast by tempest or other misfortune upon their rugged shores, the atrocious cruelties and refined tortures they, in common with the Arab, delight in exercising upon any such enemies as may be so unhappy as to fall alive into their

hands, must render the hearts of those acquainted with this people perfectly callous as to what misfortunes may befall them or their country; and many may be led to think that, as far as the advancement of civilization is concerned, the wiping off of the Kabyle and Arab races of Northern Africa from the face of the earth would be the greatest boon to humanity. Though, however, they may be fraught with all the vices of the Canaanitish tribes of old, yet the command, "Go ye after him through the city and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women," is not justifiably issued at the pleasure of man; and we can but lament to see a great and gallant nation engaged in a warfare exasperating both parties to indulge in sanguinary atrocities;—atrocities to be attributed on one side to the barbarous and savage state of those having recourse to them, but on the other proceeding only from a thirst for retaliation and bloody revenge, unworthy of those enjoying a high position as a civilized people. War is, as we all know, ever productive of horrors; but, as we are also all aware, such horrors may be greatly restrained and diminished by the exertions and examples of those in command.

CHAP. II.

FEELING OF COLONY. — MARSHAL BUGEAUD'S PROCLAMATION. — PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. — FORMATION OF COLUMN. — MARCH FROM ALGIERS. — PERMISSION TO ACCOMPANY THE COLUMN. — FORD OF THE HARATCH. — ENTHUSIASM OF THE TROOPS. — ASSASSINATION. — ARRIVAL OF THE MARSHAL. — ENCAMP FOR THE NIGHT. — JOVIAL SCENE.

THE rumour that preparations were seriously on foot for undertaking an expedition directed against the Kabylie created a great sensation throughout Algeria. The general feeling of the colony was decidedly adverse to this movement, it being considered as the first step towards a long and difficult task, which, once commenced, must of necessity be carried out, and the process of which would add very seriously to the embarrassed state of the colony, entailing an increase of the army, and additional expenses. To give a slight idea of the doubts and dissatisfaction this intended measure gave rise to, it may be well to mention that the "Commission charged by the French Chambers to examine into the state of affairs in Algeria, and to propose votes for necessary credits," anxiously called

upon the Minister of War to confirm or deny this report. The Minister thereupon confessed that such an expedition was in a state of preparation, softening it down, however, by the assurance, "*qu'elle n'aurait qu'un caractère pacifique*," but laying before them at the same time letters from the "White-headed warrior" (as the Arabs call the Marshal Bugeaud) rather tending to shake the fulfilment of this prophetic assurance, symptoms of regret being therein expressed that force of arms was not to be resorted to more than was absolutely necessary; "la soumission des indigènes n'etant jamais certaine *jusqu'à ce que la poudre eût parlé*."

Upon the measure being officially announced, the before-named Commission immediately laid before the Government their formal declaration that they considered it impolitic and dangerous for the welfare of the colony. The only notice vouchsafed to this declaration was a letter received by them through the Minister of War the 11th of April last (1847), wherein the Commission was severely rebuked for deliberating upon the question at all, it being "une question qui rentre exclusivement dans les attributions de la prérogative royale;" and the communication was therefore refused to be received by the Government. Whether the proceedings of the Commission were unconsti-

tutional, and the rebuke therefore merited, it little matters here: suffice it to say that, considering the purpose for which this Commission was appointed, and that the threatened undertaking was one of great consequence, tending to work a change in the face of affairs, and to affect the question of requisite credits, &c., it can hardly be imagined that they outstepped their duty, especially as all former commissions of the like nature had always acted in the same manner, upon the same question, when it had been before mooted in the Chambers. As one of the members of the Commission has observed, we may conclude that the reproof was given because it was easier to refuse to hear, than to reply in a satisfactory manner.

The question of attempting the submission of the Kabylie, as is well known, has been discussed repeatedly in the Chambers, and the voice of opinion has always energetically cried against the attempt. Marshal Soult repeatedly expressed his disapprobation of the measure, and the Minister of War was strongly opposed to it. Nevertheless a proclamation was issued by Marshal Bugeaud to the inhabitants of the Kabylie, to warn them that the French army was upon the point of entering their territory, "to cleanse it of those adventurers who there preached the war against

France." The proclamation then goes on to state that the Marshal has no desire to fight with them or to devastate their property; but that if there were amongst them any who wished for war, they would find him ready to accept it.

On the 26th of April a public announcement appeared, to the effect that "the expeditionary column directed against the Kabylie, under the command of Monsieur le Maréchal Duc d'Isly, will march the 7th of next month, the 'rendezvous général,' as the point of departure, to be at the place called the 'Gué de Constantine.'" Eleven battalions of infantry, two squadrons of cavalry, two sections of mounted artillery, some detachments of gendarmerie, were the troops destined to appear at this rendezvous, forming an effective of about eight thousand men.

The determination showed by the Marshal to carry out his purpose, in the teeth of government and public disapprobation, excited universal astonishment. The wise men of Algiers cried to one another, "We are going to conquer the Kabaïles; but how shall we govern them after they are conquered?" and Echo answered, "How?" Many, however, refused to believe that the Marshal would sturdily persist in his intention, until the bright sun rose upon the 6th of May to the sound of the trumpet and drum, and the

main street of Algiers resounded with the trampling of armed men. Then did the inhabitants of the city pour forth to greet the passing troops going out to fight the Kabaïles, that mysterious, bare-headed, leathern-aproned race*, whose chief accomplishment was said to be that of being "crack shots;" their chief art that of neatly roasting their prisoners alive, and their chief virtue that of loving their homes.

Many a bright eye was bedimmed that fine May morning as the gallant "vainqueurs d'Afrique" filed by, destined to seek "la gloire" amidst the rude rocks and fastnesses of that sturdy people, that "genus insuperabile bello," which from time immemorial have laughed to scorn those passing clouds of foreign usurpation, beneath which their neighbours of the plain have so often bowed.

Having applied to the Marshal for permission to accompany this most interesting expedition, a courteous assent was given: and a horse to ride, with a mule to carry canteens, tent, &c., being speedily obtained, in consideration of the sum of 700 francs, I found myself at about 5 p. m. on the 6th of May at the general rendezvous, together with my future "compagnon de voyage,"

* A Kabyle may be distinguished from the Arab of the plain by a leather apron, like that of an European blacksmith.

the Count de Wys. The officers of the sixth squadron of the first *Chasseurs d'Afrique* had invited us to mess with them during the campaign; so that, what with a good tent and every prospect of faring sumptuously every day, we felt comfortably enough installed.

Now, the point of rendezvous was upon the eastern bank of the river Haratch (the "*Savus*" of the ancients), and about two hours march to the East of Algiers. The Haratch is a considerable stream, and has its source in the mountains of the Little Atlas to the South-east of the town of Blidah, which French post is about ten leagues almost direct South of Algiers. Traversing the plain of the Metidja, here about eleven leagues in breadth, the Haratch falls into the Bay of Algiers some three or four miles to the East of that city. The waters of this river are muddy and brackish, and in winter it is liable to sudden and excessive inundations. The chief ford is that called by the French the "Guè de Constantine," but a day or two of rain renders it impassable. A short time back the French threw a fine wooden bridge across it near this point; but during the remarkably heavy "first rains" of last year (1846), in the month of November, the Haratch became a fearful torrent, inundating the Metidja to a vast extent, and the French bridge took the opportunity of going

down the river about five miles, to make a call upon its more sturdy neighbour of Turkish construction, which has buffeted rains and inundations for nearly two centuries.

Now the French bridge, having sailed down in a most lordly manner, not a stick broken, deposited itself across, and thoroughly blocked up, the arches of the Turkish bridge, thus preventing the flow of water; which so increased the inundation at that point, that a new village near at hand, overlooked by a large Turkish fort called the "Maison Carrée," was carried out to sea, with three and twenty of its inhabitants. The only house left standing after the subsiding of the waters was, *mirabile dictu!* the most weakly constructed in the village, it being of wood, and the rest of brick. The waters, bursting through the centre of this wooden house, left the sides and upper stories standing, whereas those of brick gave way en masse. My compagnon de voyage, who at that period unfortunately possessed the farm upon the limits of which we were now bivouacked, had twenty thousand francs worth of stacked hay floating about in the Bay of Algiers after this inundation. The fort mentioned above, and called the Maison Carrée, is on a commanding position overlooking to the South and South-west the eastern portion of the plain of the Metidja backed to the South by the Little Atlas, and to

the East and South-east by the lofty mountains of the Kabylie. Towards the North and North-west the eye embraces the Bay of Algiers; that city itself, and a portion of the "*Sahel*" or range of hills in the neighbourhood of the city, which shut out the view of the Metidja from the bay. The Maison Carrée is of no strength, being constructed chiefly of wood and plaster, and the malaria arising from the marshes below render it untenable during a great part of the year. Before the reduction of the tribes, however, in the neighbourhood of Algiers, it was held by the French as an important post, and many a brave fellow fell a victim to the demon of its marshes.

About 5 a. m. of the 7th the infantry and baggage were en route, leaving the cavalry, commanded by Colonel Richepanse (son of the celebrated general of the same name), to bring up the rear. During the march a detachment of twenty-five gendarmes rode between the two squadrons,—fine stalwart men, mounted on excellent Arab horses. The cavalry in Africa are indeed all well mounted, and the Chasseurs d'Afrique particularly so, their horses being all of the country, and naturally far better adapted to the climate and the fatigues of an expedition than the French and Sardinian horses with which

some of the troops are supplied. For the Arab horse partakes of the abstemious habits of the Arab himself: a little green-meat or chopped straw, or even a few leaves of the wild artichoke upon an emergency, will sustain his courage for a great length of time, and a ration of barley is a luxury to him: whereas the European horse sighs "for the leeks and onions" of his native land, his "city of delights." He must have his two or three rations a day; he droops beneath the burning sun, the scorching blast of the Sirocco, and the occasional want of water. Oats are almost unknown in Algeria, barley supplying its place, the former being far too heating for the climate. There are at this period five regiments of cavalry in Africa, and twenty-four regiments of infantry, forming, in the whole, an army of 101,779 men. Of the cavalry the Chasseurs d'Afrique are decidedly the *élite*, being picked men, superiorly mounted and equipped. Their arms are the carbine, sword, and pistols, and the uniform and accoutrements of both officers and men neat, simple, and well adapted to the service. No portion of the African army has distinguished itself more, or been so continually on service, as this cavalry. The mean price given by the "remonte" for cavalry horses is stated to be about 425 francs (about 17*l.*)

per head at this time. In 1830 the price given was about 280 francs. This increased value of horses may be ascribed to the devastation of the country by war, and to the rapid decrease and retirement of those who bred them; though this effect has been somewhat neutralized by vast importations from France and Tunis. The French have established "*haras*" (or establishments for breeding and improving the race of horses) here and there in Algeria; but, as yet, little benefit has been derived from them.

But to return to the advancing column. As we traversed the wide Metidja (at this hour looking like a vast lake, from the white mist rising from its death-fraught swamps), here cultivated with corn, and there stretching out in wide expanses of brushwood and coarse grass, or vast marshes producing forests of lofty reeds, a fine covert for the wild boar and the panther, the stillness of the morning was agreeably broken by the music of fourteen trumpeters, who preceded our squadron, playing ever and anon warlike airs suited to the occasion and their auditors. Then, as the fair-sounding tones died off, did the gay troopers burst forth into one wild chorus with the merry songs of "La belle France." All was hilarity and enthusiasm. "Ah, my lads," thought I, "some of you will be sleeping your last

sleep amidst yon snow-clad mountains, and some of you will be singing rather out of tune as you are undergoing the process of being roasted before a Kabyle fire — hazard de la guerre!"

About ½ after 10 a. m. the column arrived upon a spot on the plain of the Metidja called the "Arba." Here is held once a week one of the greatest markets of the plain, and much frequented by Arabs who bring horses, cattle, &c. The province of Constantine is however more productive of horse-flesh and ass-flesh than the other provinces; for it appears that in the last "trimestre" of 1845, 8279 horses, mules, and asses came to the Constantine markets, whereas to those of Algiers came only 5023, and to those of Oran 2341. We halted at the Arba to await the arrival of the Marshal (who was to join the column here), and some troops from the town of Blidâ, a few leagues South-east of which we now were. Eating our breakfast also was one object of the halt, and an object far more interesting to the majority of us than the former. Tents were now hastily pitched, or thrown over the brushwood, to shield the officers from the sun, and porridge-pots were quickly placed over the fires; a goodly steam of coffee-soup made thick with bread scenting the air. Of this peculiar potage the French soldiers are amazingly fond.

The Arba is a pleasant spot. I had often

been there before upon shooting excursions. Delightful groves of orange, lemon, and pomegranate, with massive clumps of lentisk and wild olive, adorn this portion of the plain, and at this time the earth was gay with flowers of every hue, whilst the song of the nightingale was heard on all sides; and, what was better still, our horses were revelling amidst fine herbage. This position is at the foot of Djebel Moussa, one of the inferior heights of the Little Atlas. Numerous streams water the plain in the neighbourhood: the chief of them is the "Oued Arba;" yet, though clear, the water is not wholesome, being liable to produce diarrhœa. During our halt news arrived at the camp that a French family of colonists in the neighbourhood had just been discovered assassinated. A surgeon being dispatched from the column, he found a man, woman, and two children, not quite dead, but fearfully wounded and mutilated by Arab robbers. Further particulars never reached me.

About 3 p. m. the Marshal arrived, and, the troops from Blidâ having already joined, the column was soon once more en route. No sooner did the cavalry begin to move off than numerous Arabs came on the ground to scrape up with infinite care such corn as might have been left by the horses. It was astonishing to see the patience with which these poor wretches

picked out, grain by grain, the barley from amongst the trampled herbage. One old grey-headed son of the prophet, with the assistance of an aged hag, had collected in his burnoose at least a gallon; and, perceiving that I regarded his gleanings with an eye of curiosity, ejaculated, "Mackash mangeria," by which he meant to inform me that he had nothing to eat. The fact is, that the last harvest was very scanty, the locusts having "eaten up the land;" and this, combined with the miserable state they are reduced to by war and by the injustice of the French administration with regard to them, has rendered even a grain of corn valuable in their eyes. Many of these blighted beings, who thus descend like vultures to glean what may have been left by the horses of a passing troop of cavalry, were once proprietors, perhaps, of that very soil upon which they now gather the husks with fear and trembling. Many of them are members of tribes that have not only bowed to, but fought for, their invaders, who, in return, have deprived them of their lands, in many instances without indemnity; reducing them thus to utter starvation, or forcing them to retire to more remote parts, where the arms of the "Christian civilisers of North Africa" do not yet prevail.

To prove that this accusation of injustice with

regard to the indigenous inhabitants proceeds from no mere prejudiced feelings towards the possessors of Algeria, I may be excused perhaps for giving an extract from the observations of a French gentleman of note and a member of the commission before spoken of. To show that I do not garble his statement, here it is in his own language: —

"Les villes indigènes ont été envahies, bouleversées, saccagées, par notre administration plus encore que par nos armes. Un grand nombre de propriétés individuelles ont été, en pleine paix, ravagées, dénaturées, détruites. Une multitude de titres que nous nous étions fait livrer pour les vérifier n'ont jamais été rendus. Dans les environs même d'Alger des terres très-fertiles ont été arrachées des mains des Arabes et données à des Européens, qui ne pouvant, ou ne voulant pas les cultiver eux-mêmes, les ont louées à ces mêmes indigènes, qui sont ainsi devenus les simples fermiers du domaine qui appartenait à leurs pères. Ailleurs, des tribus, ou des fractions de tribus, qui ne nous avaient pas été hostiles, bien plus, qui avaient combattu avec nous, et quelques fois sans nous, ont été poussées hors de leurs territoires. On a accepté d'elles des conditions qu'on n'a pas tenues, on a promis des indemnités qu'on n'a pas payées, laissant ainsi en souffrance notre honneur plus encore que les intérêts de ces indigènes."

This little extract is so highly illustrative of the mode of administration with respect to the submitted and allied tribes of Algeria, that no further remark is necessary on that subject. Is it not Montesquieu, in his "Esprit des Lois," who observes — "The right of conquest, though

a necessary and legitimate right, is an unhappy one, bequeathing to the conqueror a heavy debt to humanity, only to be acquitted by repairing, as far as possible, those evils of which he has been the cause"?—and Montesquieu was a wise man, and a Frenchman!

We reached the foot of the Little Atlas about half an hour after quitting the Arba. The slopes of these mountains are here clothed with brushwood, chiefly lentisk, stunted bellotas, and myrtle, mingled with the bright flowered coronilla and the dwarf gum-cistus. Along the face of the Djebel Moussa has been cut a route which leads to the newly established French post of Aumale, (the *Sour-gouzlan* of the Arabs, and the *Auzia* of the ancients,) which lies about four days' march to the S. E. of Algiers. Upon the summit of the Djebel-Moussa we encamped for the night, at a spot named "Bâa," or "Bou Ain." The infantry had arrived long before; for the cavalry bringing up the rear was at times sorely embarrassed by the baggage train: sometimes a mule sprawling on the not too wide road, or perhaps a waggon broken down, arrested our progress, or forced us to take a side-track in single file over rocks and through thickets, &c.; so that the first notice we had of the place of encampment for the night

was by the glaring of the watch-fires. It was a striking and beautiful scene; for the camp occupied a vast space, embracing wild ravines and slopes, broken by massive rocks and clumps of evergreens; the boughs torn from which made glorious crackling fires illuminating the very heavens.

To one unaccustomed to the scattered canvass city of a moving column, it is a difficult matter enough to discover his own tent when arriving at the encampment in darkness. Having become separated from the squadron I was attached to, during the confusion of arrival, I wandered here and there amidst rocks, brushwood, military accoutrements, men and horses stretched upon the ground, for a long time without success.

Gathered around the camp-table within the tent of our gallant captain Barthélemi, some seated on barrels and some on sacks of corn, an hour or two before retiring to rest was passed jollily enough. It is a picturesque and romantic scene, the evening's bivouack of a large body of troops. Quit the more refined joviality of an officer's tent, and listen to the rude jests and bursts of merriment amongst the bold troopers grouped around the glaring camp-fires, — the song, the pipe, and the bottle are in vogue; all care is thrown aside, and fatigue forgotten in

the enjoyment of the moment. "*Dum fata sinunt, vivite læti!*" But gradually the night draws on, hilarity gives way to sleep, and silence pervades the army, broken only by the wild neigh of the Arab horse. The sentinels alone are awake, for the "Beni-Moussa," upon whose territory we now were, have a great taste for horse-flesh, and show great skill in gratifying their taste, without draining their purses, though occasionally at some risk of making acquaintance with a bullet or a bayonet.

CHAP. III.

GOURBIES.—HALT AND "SHORT COMMONS."—HORSE STEALERS. — PRICE OF A HEAD. — TREACHERY IN THE CAMP. — PROSPECT OF BLOODSHED AND RED RIBBONS. — MODE OF PICQUETING HORSES. — BIVOUACK. — SIROCCO.

ABOUT half past four on the following morning the wild echoes of the mountain ravines and heights were awakened by the trumpets, and we were soon again in marching order. Following still the route to Aumale we were joined here and there by small detachments which had spent the livelong winter upon these mountains; and, by the dolorous expression of the officers when they spoke of past rains and snows, it might be judged that their winter bivouack had proved rather "*triste*." Since the preceding October many had remained here employed in forming this road; for it is to the army that the colony is indebted for all such roads as traverse the French possessions in Algeria. Not less than thirteen millions of francs have been absorbed each year by the necessary transport into the interior of provisions, materials &c., committed to convoys of mules led by Arabs of the country; and the greatest por-

tion of this thirteen millions has thus fallen into the hands of the Arabs instead of into those of the European colonist, because the roads to the principal out-posts are merely Arab path-ways, known to the natives alone, and incapable of admitting the passage of carts or other vehicles. It has justly been observed, in relation to a newly conquered territory, that the opening of good routes serves not only to facilitate military movements, but also to the rapid extension of the manners, customs, and commerce of the conquerors. That the Romans well understood this may be proved by the numerous remains of noble routes, intersecting, in every direction, all their ancient possessions.

The effects and materials of the little camps, which thus broke up and joined our column en route, were consigned to the care of Sidi Mohamed ben-Mahieddin, a shiekh of great influence in that district, appointed Khalif by the French, who pay him, I am informed, forty thousand francs (1600*l.*) per annum. This allied chief furnished guards to watch by night against robbers, as well as mules for transport, and necessary guides for the column.

The mountains we were now traversing are intersected by extremely deep and beautiful valleys, upon the steep slopes of which were clus-

tered numerous "gourbies" or huts, forming villages or "dashkrahs," as the mountaineers name them. These huts are constructed of rough stones, or masses of turf, the interstices filled up with mud and the dung of cattle. The roofs are thatched with coarse grass, straw, or reeds, and branches of trees. The extreme lowness of these dwellings is remarkable; the walls of few being more than three feet in height; so that the branches covering the roof often touch the ground at the eaves. One large apartment alone is found in each hut, a portion of which is enjoyed by the family, and the rest by their live-stock. It is only in the centre, generally, that beneath the ridge of the roof, one can stand upright. In the neighbourhood of these villages the land is well cultivated, and crops of remarkably fine bearded wheat were now upon the ground.

About 11 a. m. we arrived at a French camp in a deep hollow sloping down to the borders of one of the tributaries to the river Isser, a rocky rivulet of sweet water. The baggage did not arrive here until past four; and, the environs of this station being totally devoid of shelter, we lay on the ground, exposed to the fierce rays of the sun, and very "hard up" for breakfast, our canteens being of course in the rear.

All that we could collect from the suttlers attached to the little camp at this spot, (which consisted of a battalion of infantry housed beneath huts of branches and a wooden barrack,) was a small piece of cheese and a bottle of bad "vin ordinaire;" but one of the officers applying at last to the captain of the battalion to lend us a loaf until the arrival of our canteens, he courteously offered us a portion of his ration of the day, and we soon made fearful ravages with our pocket knives upon a lordly wild-boar ham. Our horses meantime were as badly off as ourselves: for strict orders being given that no green corn was to be cut, we still being in a friendly territory, the foragers were obliged to go more than a league to find grass. The Marshal himself did not descend to this spot, the name of which is Tifferas, but encamped with the infantry upon the heights above.

Some horses of the battalion I have mentioned as stationed here having been stolen the night before, it was deemed advisable to double the sentinels around our bivouack; for so adroit are the Arabs at horse-stealing, that they have been known to escape with a horse from the very centre of a camp. These predatory horse-fanciers reject with disdain bad cattle, and it is always the finest horses which disappear in so mysterious a

manner, in spite of sentinels and tethers. Gifted with the most untiring patience, the Moslem horse-stealer employs many cunning manœuvres to appropriate such horses as please him. For instance, where there are clumps of brushwood in and about the bivouack, he will transform himself into a *walking* bush, fastening around his body boughs of brushwood carefully arranged so as to cover him from head to foot; then, as the darkness comes on will he station himself, watching with the eye of the lynx each movement of the sentinel; he advances inch by inch, taking advantage of each change of guard to gain ground. An hour does not advance him perhaps more than a few yards. The sentinel sees nothing but a mass of brushwood, and confounds it with those scattered around. At last, the coveted horse at hand, the crafty Arab quits for an instant his disguise, detaches the foot-strap, and attaches in its stead a small cord of great length. His leafy cloak again resumed, he commences his retreat, and, arrived at a distance, gently tugs the cord; —the horse advances a step or two, then grazes; another jerk produces another step or two, and after due perseverance he is at the confines of the camp, mounted, and galloping like lightning. Others will advance in the same stealthy manner upon their belly, merely holding a

branch before them. And another mode is this: —The robber will lead a mare into the neighbourhood of the camp; the horses of the country being all entire horses, the vicinity of a mare renders them outrageous. Sniffing the night-air the gallant steed bursts his bonds, and dashes from the camp. The robber trusts to Providence that the most fiery only will fall into the snare, and, mounting his mare, away he goes. The noble pursuer follows madly the track of his desire;—

"Thro' his mane and tail the high wind sings;"

onward, onward they fly — the pursuer and the pursued — through the brushwood, across the wide plain, or into the heart of the mountains. Then does the seducer seize his prize, and, delighted with his success, leads him to his gourbie. His admiring brother-rascals gather round, and, examining with a critical eye the noble prisoner, laugh to scorn the "dog of a Christian" his former owner. Numerous indeed are the manœuvres thus put in practice by the African horse-stealer, and often is he successful: but woe betide him if he is caught! for the morning sun will shine upon his head, rolling, bloody and gaping, before the French commander's tent, much to the benefit of him who cut it off. The Marshal gives ten francs a head for these noc-

turnal visitors; and this being a treasure for a poor sentinel, I often had strong suspicions, (though perhaps unjustly,) that more than one head was brought into the camp, which, by the phrenological formation of it, had never a sufficiency of wit to have belonged to a horse-stealer; but had probably wagged on the shoulders of some unfortunate, led by curiosity within the purlieus of the camp, too early in the morning for his personal safety.

The succeeding day, the camp not being raised until a late hour, some of us took our guns, but saw nothing, in the game way, excepting numerous blue pigeons, which inhabit the rocks in the neighbourhood. Within a short distance of the camp, a most delightful ravine, with groves of oranges, almonds, and olives, attracted our steps. Upon one of its slopes was a considerable dashkrah, embedded amidst wild olives, mingled with the jujeb and karoubie. As the wanderer gazes upon these retired villages, so sweetly situated, a voice cries within him, "Here is surely the very throne of peace and undisturbed tranquillity!" Sad error! "All *save the spirit of man* is divine!" These wild mountaineers, if not united against one common enemy, such as an invading Christian host, are continually waging war, one tribe against another, revenging deadly

feuds or creating fresh ones; and, as a people, they are vicious in the extreme, and given up to the most degrading immoralities.

It was past one p. m. before the baggage and infantry were on the move; the Marshal having awaited the arrival of a courier from Algiers. About half-past two p. m. the cavalry were in the saddle. The egress from the valley of Tifferas presented many bad passes. Amongst other *faux pas*, made especially by the beasts of burthen of the convoy, one unfortunate mule rolled over, and fell above thirty feet perpendicular into the bed of the river: nevertheless, though heavily laden, it escaped serious injury. Such little incidents are of course of frequent occurrence during the march of a column through a rough country. We crossed the bed of the Isser, or some of its numerous tributary streams, more than twelve times in the course of this afternoon's march, following the main course of the river through a deep valley with lofty heights of sand-rock on either side; in some parts clothed with stone-pine, and in others with a prickly species of broom, presenting one mass of small yellow flowers.

Three soldiers of a battalion of "Turcos" with us were convicted this day of selling gun-powder to the Arabs. These traitors were, it

was reported, sent back to Algiers under an escort provided by the Shiekh Mahieddin, and were probably condemned to the punishment of the "boulet;" that is to say, to have attached to them a heavy cannon-ball by a chain passed round the body and leg; the dragging about of which, in this climate, is anything, it may be imagined, but agreeable. A report was rife throughout the column, that Sidi Mahieddin had expressed great surprise and displeasure at the Marshal's traversing his territory with so large a force; and it was also rumoured, about this time, that some Kabyle tribes, amongst whom we should probably arrive about the 15th, were making hostile preparations to receive us. Amongst these tribes of the Kabylie many French deserters were said to have sought refuge, and to have assisted and instructed them in forming redoubts and other military works; so that the column was quite enlivened with the expectation of an affair to break the monotony of a peaceful march; and as the officers beheld visions of decoration, so did the common soldier of plunder.

This night we encamped at the junction of the "Oued-Hactatharba" and the "Oued-Meklah;" the former flowing into the latter from the South-east. The Oued Meklah is in fact a mere continuation of the Isser; the chief source of

which river (according to the French map of the Province of Algiers, drawn at the "dépôt-général de la guerre" for 1846) seems to be near "Berouaghia," about fifteen miles S.S.E. of Medeah, and in the territory of the "Beni-Hassan." From thence, flowing under different names in a north-easterly direction for about forty-five miles, it suddenly turns in the territory of the "Beni-Djaad" almost direct North, and flows into the sea some five miles to the West of Cape Djinet, which promontory is about forty five miles to the East of Algiers.

The site of our bivouack this evening was a little plain, or mountain basin, amphitheatred with lofty heights of sand-rock adorned with groves of stone pine. On these heights outposts were placed about half a mile on either side of the camp. Their huge fires of unctuous pine-wood, glaring through the dark mantle of night, produced a fine effect. The column was accompanied by numerous flocks and herbs convoyed by Arabs. The subdued or allied tribes are of great service to the French in this way, as also in supplying camels, horses, mules, &c.; especially during the long expeditions into the interior towards the South: for every active column calls upon all the tribes of the district to be traversed, to supply a stated number of beasts

of burthen, over which a person, designated by the respective caïds, presides, regulating the order of march, loading, unloading, &c. And then again each moving column is followed at some days' distance by a column *de ravitaillement*, as it is called, composed almost entirely of infantry, and conducting to stated points a supply of provisions almost equal to that accompanying the preceding column. This second convoy is also composed of beasts of burthen, supplied by the different tribes, upon an order addressed to the respective caïds, by the commandant of each subdivision of that portion of the French possessions which is to be traversed. For the columns at this period operating in the South, it is stated, that above ten thousand camels thus supplied are in movement. Including our own column, there were at that time nine columns, great and small, in active movement within the three provinces, seven of these being operating in the desert regions.

This night passed without disturbance in any way, excepting such as was caused now and then by a horse bursting his foot-straps, and wildly rushing here and there, causing considerable confusion; for, no sooner does an Arab charger find himself at liberty in such cases, than he commences a furious attack upon his fellows in

bonds, and so fiercely do they fight, that it often requires several men and showers of heavy blows to arrest the combat. Then, if not at once caught, away he gallops, striking tent-ropes, and upsetting many a canvass house, to the utter discomfort of its fatigued tenant, who, arising in wrath from his sheep-skin, suddenly finds his head broke by the falling supports of his tent, and himself struggling enveloped in canvass. The mode of attaching the horses at the bivouack is by means of "entraves;" that is to say, a long and strong rope is stretched upon the ground, and affixed by means of iron or wooden pegs well driven in at the two extremities. At regular distances upon this rope are attached other pieces of rope about a foot in length, with a buckle and strap to go round the fore-feet of the horse. Thus fifty horses perhaps of a squadron would be tethered to the same rope, which, with "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether," would undoubtedly soon be hauled up; but, such unity of action exceeding their instinct, each one only adds to his neighbour's difficulties in case of an "émeute."

By half-past three, on the morning of the 10th, all was again bustle and excitement: bugles and drums sounding, tents being hastily struck and packed, mules loaded and horses saddled,—every

man upon his legs, and fully occupied. Then did the shrill clarions sound the march: battalion after battalion filed off the ground, and soon the gay cavaliers leapt into their saddles. Having caroused until long after midnight the preceding evening, our slumbers, though deep, had been of rather short duration; but a hasty cup of coffee and a whiff of "the weed" soon rectified any tendency we had for stretching and gaping. By ten a. m. we arrived at the spot fixed upon for another bivouack; and a most delightful spot it was, being overshadowed by ancient terebinths, beneath which luxuriated fine fresh herbage for our horses, watered by a rocky rippling stream. Then upon the southern extremity of this grove was a deep ravine with lofty cliffs and jutting rocks overhanging the "Oued-Bethôme;" the waters of which little river are sweet, and fall in numerous cascades, forming deep holes in its course, well stocked with fish. From a lofty promontory of slate-rock, jutting forth some two hundred feet above this ravine, the coup-d'œil was magnificent and enlivening enough, embracing the winding course of the stream with its broken and romantic precipices; troops of horses and of mules ascending and descending, in single file, the narrow precipitous tracts leading down to the water; others bathing and rolling in the stream; hundreds

of soldiers scattered here and there, some bathing, others washing their scanty wardrobes; their comrades fishing, or rambling amidst the wild rocks in search of artichokes, asparagus, or anything edible that might come to hand; whilst others were actively employed cutting fire-wood: for the Marshal had issued especial orders against the cutting the terebinths or olives of the grove above; it being indeed the only bivouack affording shade, upon the route between Algiers and Aumale, after leaving the plain of the Metidja.

To add to the pleasantness of this bivouack, game abounded in the vicinity, partridges, hares, and quails being very numerous; then the beautiful "shaga-rag," or roller, with its plumage of green and blue, glistened in the sun, and the solitude-loving Hoopoe, with its elegant crest, might be seen flittering with noiseless wing from bush to bush; whilst large falcons and the black and white vulture wheeled in air, eager to act the part of scavengers to the camp. But as the heat of the day came on, all these birds took refuge amidst the neighbouring rocks, or amongst the thickest foliage of the trees and bushes. One species alone dares to face the intense mid-day heat of these regions, and that is the large

"bee-eater" (Merops Apiaster), a most elegant bird, which flies in large companies, uttering a continual short piping cry, as, darting from spot to spot, skimming lightly over the flowers, or rising high in air and then rapidly descending again, it chases the butterflies or numerous beetles swarming here. These birds are remarkably social in their habits, and may often be seen a dozen or more so close together as to touch one another, perched upon the lightest twigs at the extremities of a bough. As the traveller lies within his tent, taking his siesta during the great heat of the day, the note of this bird and the garrulous chirping of the lace-winged "cicada" are the only sounds which greet his ear in this clime. The terebinth trees at this bivouack had very much the appearance of ill-grown oak at a little distance; both the boll and the arrangement of the foliage having much the same character as in that tree; but upon nearer approach it will be remarked, that the leaves are much narrower and more sharply denticulated than those of the oak, and that each little frond bears nine of these leaves; and if rubbed they give forth a sweet and strong but rather turpentiny scent, by no means unpleasant. The bark of the terebinth is rugged, and those at

this bivouack had every appearance of extreme old age.

A strong sirocco set in about two o'clock this day, and blew very hard all night: nevertheless did we enjoy ourselves much that evening, as, couched in gay groups upon the luxuriant herbage, each listened to or related tales and strange adventures, which had befallen him during wanderings and campaigns in this wild land. Others, who did not partake so freely of the wine-cup and "flow of soul," enjoyed the enlivening strains of the band playing before our leader's tent, or the outpourings of the nightingale and the soft low whistle of the little "civetta" owl. Brightly did the stars glisten through the dark foliage above us, and all was enjoyment and tranquillity of soul. Then how sound, how unbroken, was our repose, when one by one we had sought our tents!

"Let him who crawls enamoured of decay
Cling to his couch, and sicken years away;
Heave his thick breath, and shake his palsied head;
Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed."

CHAP. IV.

SILOES. — MODE OF DISCOVERING THEM. — A COLD BATH. — FORT OF HAMZA. — ARAB ALLIES. — SIDI OMAR. — BEN SALEM'S VISIT TO THE "CITY OF LIME." — SPORTING EXTRAORDINARY. — ARAB HARPIES. — TOBACCO A "VERTUOUS HERB." — A FURIOUS WILD BOAR. — SAID-BEN-OMAR. — PATRIOT ASSASSINS. — SOLDIER SHOT. — ARAB SHOT. — FIRE THE GOURBIES.

Upon the 11th we encamped upon the great plain of Hamza, having marched no more than four leagues. This plain, though devoid of wood, is well cultivated. Heavy crops of wheat and barley betokened the industry of the tribes dwelling upon it, and women coming forth from the numerous douars stood in little groups, and, placing their faces almost close together, greeted the passing column with that long ringing cry, so peculiar to the Arab and Moorish women, — a cry not to be described or imitated, though somewhat resembling the running down of an alarum clock. These friendly greetings might be attributed to fear rather than to love; and doubtless they cursed the "Roumi dogs" by all their gods, when at a safe distance. These poor creatures who thus saluted us were generally wretched-

looking hags, though some were young. Their lack of beauty, however, did not always save them from the insults of more than one ruffian of the arrière-garde. Nevertheless they were sly and shy, flitting at full speed towards their black tents, upon seeing any soldier inclined to hold intercourse with them.

Great care was necessary upon the march this day, on the part of the cavalry, there being numerous "silos" about the plain, large enough to engulf horse and rider. The Arab having gathered his harvest, digs numbers of these pits, and placing chopped straws at the bottom and sides, conceals there his corn, and often his money. When full, a large stone is laid over the orifice, and then all is covered with earth, and rendered as similar as possible to the space around. A silo is generally from ten to twelve feet in depth, the mouth being comparatively small, but the sides bulging out towards the bottom, where, ordinarily speaking, it is about seven or eight feet in width. The sagacity of an Arab is generally requisite to discover these subterraneous granaries, and many a French troop, suffering from scarcity of provisions, passes unconsciously over hoards of fine golden corn, but a few feet beneath the surface of the soil. The method adopted by the French to find these precious deposits, is this: — men

are set to pierce the ground, where it is suspected that there may be silos, with the ramrods of their muskets: the ringing of the iron upon the stone at the mouth betrays the secret. Another method is to strike the ground with heavy sticks, when again the practised ear will detect the hollow sound above a silo. After a pit is exhausted the Arab leaves it open until the ensuing year, or deserts it for a fresh place. It is during that period they prove so dangerous to the cross-country rider; for rank herbage often hiding them from view, many a French soldier has suddenly bid adieu to his comrades Quintus-Curtius-fashion, and more than one horse's neck as well as man's has been thus broken, especially during the night marches, so much in vogue with some of the French generals in Africa. Sometimes, moreover, these pits serve as places of confinement for refractory soldiers: and it is a punishment not by any means popular in the ranks; for, being sometimes crammed in, many together, the offenders are liable to be smothered if it is hot, and frozen if it is cold. Tales are told of more than one having been taken out dead from cold after passing a night in such a campaigning black hole. I myself was once ensnared by one of these pits: for riding over a plain, one sheet of mud and water, in

the province of Constantine, my horse suddenly plunged into a silo full of water. Providentially, both of us escaped with nothing worse than a ducking; and that but lightly felt by either, I imagine, as three days' and nights' incessant rain, without shelter, had pretty well inured us to water.

Our bivouack this day was upon a gentle inclination of the plain to the South-west, with a dirty brook at hand, named Oued-Fajad, flowing in the same direction. We had left some distance in our rear a fountain called Ain-Bessan it was said, and therefore had to put up with dirty brackish water. Our horses, however, revelled in luxuriant grass. Quails and the great collared lark abounded in the green corn and grass land around, affording good sport. One very necessary article for cooking them, after being shot, was wanting, viz., wood to make fires. No orders having been given to lay in a stock at the preceding bivouack, and the plain here being totally unwooded, every man looked aghast, and asked his neighbour how the thousand porridge-pots in camp were to do their duty. By means of dried herbs, chips, and rubbish, collected here and there, a few fires for the public benefit were at last made, and the larks and quails duly dished up and devoured. For the

future, upon quitting a bivouack where there was a supply of wood, or else upon the march, every soldier was ordered to carry a stock, in order to avoid any repetition of this dearth of fires. In spite of strict commands, issued by the Marshal, against cutting the green corn for forage, several of the men were guilty of so doing this day, and, being arrested by the gens-d'armes attached to the column, were led before the Marshal, and duly lectured and punished.

On the 12th we encamped upon the borders of "Oued-Hamza," upon the slope of a hill covered with the wild jujeb; the extremely sharp thorns of which shrub were most annoying both to ourselves and to our horses. Let the sportsman beware of penetrating a jungle of this cruel shrub during the ardour of the chase; for he will assuredly sacrifice a great portion of his raiment, and quickly make his exit again covered with wounds. The partridge and the hare find within it an excellent strong-hold. Our bivouack lay about a mile to the south of an old Turkish fort, called Bordj-Hamza, where formerly a "suffrah," or company of Turkish soldiers, were posted to keep an eye upon the tribes in the neighbourhood: and this was about the most remote outpost of the Turks in that direction; for little did they obtain but hard blows if they were

audacious enough to venture amongst the Kabailes of the mountains at hand. The Turks indeed were very shy of interfering, more than was actually necessary, even with the tribes of the plain beneath their yoke. Provided that they paid peaceably the eighth of the produce of their land, and the slight poll-tax demanded as tribute, they left them undisturbed to enjoy their country, customs, and mode of administration. Nothing more than the walls of the fort of Hamza now remain, and those in a very dilapidated condition. It seems to have been of a square form, and to have enclosed about an acre and a half of ground. Upon the mound on which this fort is situated, about two hundred cavaliers, subjects of the allied chief, and khalif of the Medjanah, Sidi Mockrani, awaited our approach,—a wild and savage-looking band of warriors, armed with long guns, ancient Spanish blunderbusses, pistols, and rough wooden-sheathed knives and swords. There they sat, upon their hardy, active horses, wrapped in their flowing burnoose, and huge hats of the Palmetta leaf on their heads. No "fantasia" greeted the arrival of the "Grey-headed warrior," of whose renown they had so often heard. The chief Mockrani was mounted upon a beautiful Arab horse, of noble race, and superbly caparisoned, the high-backed saddle, the broad

head-straps of the bridle, and the breast-piece, worked in velvet and red leather gorgeously wrought with gold and silver; whilst large tassels of massive gold thread were appended here and there. By the side of this great chief was a fair and lively boy of some sixteen years of age, his son we were told. The chief delight of this young mountain-prince seemed to be pricking his horse with the long-pointed irons upon his heels, in order to show his horsemanship; and proudly did he toss his head, covered with an enormous hat, adorned with ostrich plumes, as his fiery steed bounded from the ground, and with a wild neigh shook impatiently his long silken forelock from off his warrior-eyes, red and rolling, as if he smelt the battle.

> "His nostrils drink the air:—
> Sometimes he trots, as if he told the steps
> With gentle majesty and modest pride;
> Anon he rears upright, curvets, and leaps."

Then upon a superb mule sat an ancient, evidently of note, his double burnoose white as the driven snow, and his turban entwined with a scarlet scarf. Two black slaves and two runners stood at hand, attending his nod. This was Sidi Omar, a marabbutt of great odour, and brother of the Kabyle chief, Sidi Ahmed-ben-

Salem, an ancient kalifa of the Emir Abd-el-Kader.

This ex-khalif came down from his mountains, in the early part of the preceding month (April), and presented himself to the Marshal at Algiers. He was received by the French authorities with great satisfaction and pomp; for Sidi Ahmed-ben-Salem is a mighty chief, and he had, until that period, proved himself an inveterate enemy to the French; and an enemy difficult to get at, on account of the impenetrable nature of his dominions. Great was the noise and rejoicing then at Algiers, when it was reported that Ben-Salem was actually approaching the city. A squadron of cavalry, with its band of music, went forth to meet the new ally; and some hundred Arab cavaliers played a brilliant fantasia for many miles along the route, charging down upon the chief, and firing an unlimited quantity of powder into his face; then dashing off in wild disorder successively to renew the charge, and administer further sulphureous doses. Such is the Arab mode of salutation. Sidi Ahmed-ben-Salem is a man of superior gravity; mild, but of most dignified expression and carriage; the type of a North African mountain-prince; and as he thus allowed himself to be led in triumph into the city usurped by the

Christian, cursed by every good Moslem, his breast must have been a hell of doubt;—doubt, as to the wisdom of thus confiding himself to the sworn enemies of his creed and country,—doubt, as to the construction that might be put upon this action by the patriot and the orthodox. But no perturbation was visible on his countenance; neither pleasure, nor pain, doubt, fear, nor curiosity, varied the dignified gravity of his expression. He looked neither to the right nor to the left as he entered that city, which for sixteen years he had not dared to visit, and which now presented a scene so perfectly new to his eyes, European houses, people, and costumes. In spite of the fatigues of his journey, he turned aside, upon his arrival, from the house which had been prepared for him, and entering the chief mosque there remained fasting and prostrate in prayer all that night. Ben-Salem was on this occasion distinguished from those around him by the extreme simplicity of his costume; there being neither about himself nor his horse the slightest ornament of any kind. By the side of the chief rode his most beloved and venerable friend, Sidi Abder-rahman, a marabbutt of noted sanctity, dwelling in the mountains in the neighbourhood of the sea-coast town of Dellys. But adieu to Sidi Ahmed-Ben-Salem and his beloved

Abder-rahman for the present. This brother of his, Sidi Omar, who, as we have seen, paid the French column a visit at Hamza, however holy and austere he may be, is a most disreputable-looking old rascal, with a piebald beard and squat nose. The mule he rode (for a "saint on horse-back" is not admissible in North Africa) was very superior in point of personal appearance to his master, whose obesity pronounced him a very Friar Tuck.

Several battalions, and some indigenous cavalry in the French service, denominated spahis, joined the column at this bivouack, being under the command of Colonel Ladmirault, the military commandant of the new French post of Aumale, which now lay some seven or eight leagues to our south-west. Wild boars abound in these regions; and shortly before the troops from Aumale joined us one of these tenants of the surrounding brush-wood, disturbed from his lair, charged through a body of cavalry, upsetting horses and men; and in spite of shots fired at him, again turning, this furious pig charged back again, and then, un-scathed, disappeared in the thicket. Certain chiefs of the tribes around came down to the camp to-day to negociate with the Marshal. Some of these rendered submission; but others departed in a very dubious state of mind, in

spite of the Marshal's declaration, that, if they did not determine to submit, he would, upon his return, burn and utterly destroy them, their families, houses, and crops.

The Oued-Hamza, (or Oued-Bouera, as it is sometimes called,) flowing close to our camp, contains an amazing quantity of a fish which the French termed barbeaux. The largest weighed perhaps two pounds, and they proved excellent eating. So numerous were they, that the soldiers caught them in abundance with their shirts, forming bags, of which, by way of tunnel nets, one would hold a sleeve on either side, whilst others beat down towards it; thus driving the fish in. Some of the "Zouaves" might be seen catching them in the same manner with their ceintures; whilst those happy enough to have brought fish-hooks from Algiers, fished, in the more orthodox manner, with beetles, grasshoppers, &c. In one hole alone, one of these disciples of old Isaac took, in little more than an hour, seventy good fish; and I myself was almost equally fortunate; so that extensive frying went on in camp, and sumptuous were the dinners.

The waters of the Oued-Hamza are overshadowed by oleanders, aspen, and tamarisk, intermingled with a very narrow-leaved willow. Upon the slopes of the hills, on the opposite shore

to our bivouack, grew large clumps of lentisk, wild olive, and evergreen oak; whilst nearer the summits flourished the stone pine. Game abounded in the vicinity of the water; and amongst the rarer birds might be observed a peculiar species of cuckoo, which brought to my recollection the banks of the Nile, where this same bird may at times be found. The traveller Bruce calls it the honey-bird, from its love for and acuteness in finding the hoards of the wild bee. The black-headed jay might also be seen here, and numerous falcons of different species. A heavy thunder-storm set in about 6 p.m. of this day, lasting about two hours. This was the first drop of rain we had had since quitting Algiers. Neither had we any more until our arrival at this same spot upon our return, about three weeks later.

About half-past five on the morning of the 13th, our Hamza bivouack was abandoned to the Arab harpies, who, as usual, had been hovering about the camp, eagerly awaiting our departure, that they might fall upon the refuse left by the troops, both digestible and indigestible. Amongst the latter which passed into the possession of these ravenous scavengers, was my campaigning pipe, an old ally, which many a time had with its friendly aid smothered the pangs of hunger, set

at nought drenching rains, and soothed dark meditation. "The fact is, Squire, the moment a man takes to a pipe, he becomes a philosopher; it's the poor man's friend; it calms the mind, soothes the temper, and makes a man patient under trouble." Sam Slick was a correct observer of "human natur." Let him who scoffs at and reviles tobacco set forth on a long journey without it, amidst the wilds of Africa: his philosophy will be sorely tried at times, and he will "pray with his face towards" the Havannahs. It cannot be said, however, that the Arabs of Algeria are very much addicted to the use of this "divine, rare, and super-excellent weed, which goes far beyond all their panaceas, potable gold, and philosopher's stones,—a sovereign remedy to all diseases." Many tribes indeed refrain both from it and from drinking coffee. This peculiarity is more especially applicable to those who inhabit the interior of the country. Those dwelling in the vicinity of towns more generally indulging in these luxuries, is to be accounted for by the ease with which they may obtain them, the cheapness, and the daily temptation of gazing upon fat Moors and other dwellers within walls, sitting before their shops and houses with their "chibouks" in their mouths, wholly lost to all mundane cares, their imaginations revelling in

the gardens of delight. Many of the tribes who refrain from the above luxuries, do so from a religious feeling; this indulgence being interdicted by some ascetic marabbutts, whose descendants they are.

When travelling in the southern parts of the province of Constantine, and in the "Zaâb of Biscara," I found but few Arabs either smokers or habitual drinkers of coffee. Neither do the Kabaïles of the country we were now traversing patronise apparently the "narcotic weed" to any extent; for we saw no tobacco-plantations during the expedition, nor a single pipe amongst the variety of spoil which fell into the hands of the troops en route.

A Sheikh of the "Harib" tribe, (a fraction, I believe, of the "Oued-Belli," who occupy a considerable territory in the vicinity of Hamza,) one Saïd-ben-Omar, paid me a visit at our bivouack on the evening of the 12th. He was a fair-faced Kabyle, of great intelligence, and extremely gentle in manners. This interesting guest, upon my offering him a pipe, received it; but after putting it to his lips, without drawing a whiff, returned it, observing at the same time, with the utmost courtesy, that "he took it from my hands as a token of amity and hospitality, but that it was contrary to the tenets of

his religion to smoke; therefore he did not smoke." Saïd-ben-Omar examined my maps of the country with infinite attention, was very inquisitive, and told me, *inter alia*, that his tribe could bring twenty thousand guns into the field. We parted excellent friends, with a promise on his part to send me a fine dish of cous-coussou for my supper; but neither Saïd nor cous-coussou appeared again, until about a month afterwards, when, upon the return of the column, having bivouacked one evening some leagues from the spot where our first interview took place, my friend came to the camp, found out my tent, and with many apologies presented a dish of cous-coussou, backed with two dozen hen's eggs,—a gift which proved very acceptable to our mess, our larder boasting at that time little else than haricot-beans. Saïd-ben-Omar pressed me very much to leave the French column, and go with him into the mountains at hand, and he would show me his mares, and his house, and his flocks, and his herds; for he was, he said, "very rich," and had "exceeding many flocks and herds." Though strongly disposed to accept his offer, I did, for certain reasons, after some consideration, decline it, bidding him an affectionate adieu, and inviting him to visit me on his next journey to the "City of Lime," —Algiers.

Upon quitting the bivouack at Hamza, the line of march lay along the Oued-Hamza for about a league; then, leaving the valley to our left, we gained a hilly country cultivated partially with corn, and, evidently, until the era of our arrival, thickly populated; for we passed gourbie after gourbie tenantless. The birds were flown with all their Penates; but the nests were many of them warm, and symptoms of a hasty flight might be remarked; such as here and there still smoking embers of a fire, some little domestic utensils forgotten in the scurry, and now and then a chicken or old hen, which, having clung too tenaciously to the paternal roost, ran great hazards of finishing their career in soldiers' porridge-pots. Nevertheless, so cunning were these Kabyle fowls that few of them suffered by this proof of attachment to their homes. Rarely showing themselves more than once to the soldiers, they dashed into the brushwood and disappeared, baffling the researches of the hungry troopers, who ran here and there in vain with watering mouths.

These Kabyle settlements were mostly of extremely simple construction. An embankment of earth being thrown up some four or five feet in height, with a small general entrance-passage left at one side, enclosed a square

space of some forty feet. From the top of this embankment, a roof sloping upwards, and formed of branches of trees with the leaves on and intermingled with coarse grass, heath, &c. was carried inwards, and supported by rough stems of branches by way of rafters, rough poles serving as uprights; the face of each tenement inside the square being built up with rough bushes. The back of each hut was thus formed by the embankment, and the entrance of each tenement inside the enclosed space. Each of these settlements contained some three or four huts only; each one presenting but one chamber, common to man, beast, and fowl. Around the top of the embankment were heaped most prickly bushes, and the entrance into the square was closed with masses of the same. Thus, at a distance, the whole has the appearance of a mere heap of bushes.

The total desertion of all these habitations hinted to us that there was a hostile feeling in the land; and a stronger hint to this effect was shortly afterwards afforded us: for, halting about mid-day, for half an hour, some of the soldiers went down to drink at a river flowing at the foot of the elevation upon which the halt took place, and one of them, remaining a few minutes behind his comrades, received a

couple of bullets in his body from a blunderbuss fired from the covert on the opposite bank. Three Arab cavaliers were then seen by us to dash off at full gallop across the country. Such was our first introduction to the "Beni-Yala;" and the first living proof indeed we received that day of there being any inhabitants in the land. Habitations and extensive cultivation had told us that such must be the case; but not a human biped had we encountered or beheld. The unfortunate victim, thus doomed to be the first to fall upon this expedition, dragged his bleeding body some way up the hill, and with the assistance of some of his comrades reached the halting place, bade his companions in arms adieu, and closed his eyes for ever. Soon after resuming the march, an Arab, who was perceived by an officer concealed in the brushwood, upon being hailed took to his heels; but a pistol-bullet piercing his back he fell to rise no more, and the soldiers rejoiced that their deceased comrade was so speedily avenged.

One man of our squadron was left behind at the halt, and fears were rife that he had fallen a prey to the crafty foe. I had turned out with him, in search of game, upon arriving at the halt; but, finding the heat excessive, and a "coup de soleil" much more likely

to be obtained than partridges, had wended my way back, and sought repose beneath a bush. This fellow was regretted, not only as an exemplary man, but as a good shot and chief caterer to our mess. Greatly did we rejoice, therefore, upon his arrival some time afterwards. After having lost himself for a time he fortunately fell in with the arrière-garde. Several gourbies of the Beni-Yala were fired, in consequence of their having thus commenced hostilities. They are a powerful and warlike tribe, inhabiting a territory extending from the southern base of the rugged Djurjura to the banks of the Oued-Sahel, of the waters of which river and its tributaries they drink.

About 2 p. m. the halt was sounded, and it proved our bivouack for the night. Shortly before this several horsemen of the Beni-Yala were to be seen conferring together upon a height some distance off. They were evidently sheikhs holding council; and, with the aid of a glass, one was seen to write on a piece of paper, and give it to another at his side, who dashed away, as if the bearer of an urgent dispatch.

CHAP. V.

AN ANGLER SHOT. — OUTPOSTS ENGAGED. — HEADS BROUGHT INTO CAMP. — AMBUSCADE LAID. — KABYLE TOWNS. — NARROW ESCAPE FROM DROWNING. — A CRAFTY ROBBER. — HORSE-STEALER SLAIN. — BRIGADIER SHOT BY A COMRADE. — CONFERENCE.

From the little incident mentioned in the preceding chapter, and from the deserted gourbies, it was the general opinion that we should become more intimately acquainted with the Beni-Yala in the night season, and measures of precaution were accordingly taken; for these Kabaïles place much faith in night-attacks, a peculiarity which the Arabs of the plain are not at all given to. The Kabyle stalks forth when darkness covers the face of the earth; falls upon the unsuspecting enemy with shrieks and hellish yells, or prowls after sustenance in their neighbourhood; — then "when the sun ariseth he getteth himself away to his den," like the rest of the "beasts of the forest."

The position of our bivouack was delightful. We had now descended into a rich valley, watered by the Oued-Sahel and by numerous brawling

rivulets of the finest water. Groves of noble olive, karoube-trees, &c. afforded a most grateful shade. It was a spot indeed—

"Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace;"

but these were shrines little bowed to by the fierce tenants of the canvass city so suddenly raised, deposing solitude from this her gorgeous throne, disquieting Nature in this "her secret haunt." Glad enough were the troops to find themselves within a hostile territory. The foragers sallied forth armed; each, bearing his sickle and his sack, fell with hearty good-will upon the unripe crop of wheat for the consumption of the camp. Groups of the Beni-Yala gazed from the neighbouring heights,—the fierce blood boiling in their veins;

"Allah il Allah! Vengeance swells the cry;"

and many an eye glares with rage and hatred beneath the covers of the surrounding brushwood, watching the movements of the detested "Roumis," lading their horses and mules with the fruit of Moslem toil and industry. Alas! for the trooper that lingered behind his comrade foragers! Many a long gun, clenched by an exasperated hand, was ready to seal his fate.

The banks of the river flowing about a quarter

of a mile below the camp, were clothed with thick brushwood. Willows, oleanders, tamarisks, and lofty reeds overhung its waters in wild luxuriance,—a noble covert for wallowing boars and crafty "ratons;" moreover, affording an excellent place of ambuscade for more dangerous tenants,—the fierce and cunning Arab. No sooner were we arrived at the bivouack, horses and mules tethered, arms piled, and tents pitched, than the soldiers gladly hastened to this delightful stream to bathe their weary limbs, to assuage their burning thirst, or to repose upon the banks. Others with rod in hand waded in the waters, and regardless of their safety wandered here and there, their thoughts fixed upon "the trembling quill." More than once an ill-directed shot from some concealed foe would rudely disturb their piscatory musings: but such warnings were little heeded, until a brother of the angle presently fell dead in the brawling waters, his life-blood staining the bright stream. However, though the Kabaïles had his life they had not his fish; for one of the slain angler's comrades upon taking to his heels pounced upon the produce of his brother's skill, and bore it off in triumph to add to his evening's fry. It was not long after this that an infantry serjeant, upon the point of stooping down to drink at the river, caught sight of an

Arab crouched amongst some jungle, and deliberately covering him with his murderous long gun. The Beni-Yala bullet spared his life, but broke his arm, putting an effectual extinguisher on his dreams of glory to be gleaned during the campaign. To prevent the recurrence of such accidents, a line of sentinels was stationed along the river bank on the camp side: but so strong is the temptation to enjoy the luxury of a bath after a fatiguing march, beneath a hot sun and a suffocating dust kicked up by tramping troops, that many were guilty of evading the sentinels by means of the brushwood,—myself amongst the number.

Now "soft-winged evening" came hovering over us, chasing from the woodlands and the sand-rock heights the gilded tints of the setting sun. Repose was in the camp: suddenly a sharp fusillade greeted our ears—the Kabaïles were attacking one of the outposts. The ring of the French carbine and the dull explosion of the Kabyle gun were easily distinguishable; for the latter are loaded with enormous charges of powder badly rammed down. Volley succeeded volley. The voice of the nightingale was hushed; for man marred the tranquillity of her abode. The wailing jackal fled far aloof; and the crafty lynx, prowling forth upon his evening chase,

bounded into the dark recesses of the tangled covert. A fiendish yell from the repulsed mountaineers reached our ears; then all was quiet again, and the stillness of the ensuing night was only interrupted afterwards by dropping shots from different quarters of the camp, chiefly proceeding from French muskets, directed against robber Arabs descried by the sharp-eyed sentinels amidst the brushwood. The sentinels were doubled this night, to guard as much as possible against these bush-rangers. Our own tent being very near the edge of brushwood, we quaked for the safety of our horses; but had the satisfaction of a soldier being placed between them and the treacherous covert. The lives of these midnight marauders were, as has been before stated, valued by the Marshal at ten francs a-piece; and the morning sun rose upon four grinning ghastly heads; the distorted features begrimed with clotted blood and dirt; the eyes starting from their sockets to greet the "grey-haired warrior" as he issued from his tent. Gay flowers and luxuriant herbage, laden with pearly drops of refreshing dew, were crushed by these foul remnants of night-prowlers. How vile a contrast! The sweet breath of morning was infected; a very paradise became a charnel-house.

The clear-sounding trumpet, responded to

from every quarter of the camp, ushered in another day. The rolling drums beat to arms, breaking the silence of morning. Quickly the soldier springs from his hard couch, obedient to the well-known summons. Tents are struck, and baggage packed upon the unwilling stubborn mules by dint of lusty blows and blasphemy. The din of preparation for the march resounds through the woods and groves, reaching the ears of some hundreds of the Beni-Yala crouched amongst the rocks of an overlooking height, about a mile to the north of the camp.

> "They do not sleep,—
> On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
> I see them sit;"

some grouped together in deep consultation; some clutching their long guns, burning to throw a bullet amidst the retiring host, yet fearful to approach: whilst others may be seen passing onward through the brushwood, in all probability to place themselves in ambuscade upon the line of march, to fire a few cowardly shots upon the arrière-garde, or to massacre any stragglers left behind from carelessness or fatigue. Battalion after battalion now filed off. The artillery and the baggage train wound along beneath the wide-spreading branches of noble olives. Then again the trumpet awoke the echoes of the wood-

land, and the trooper sprang into his saddle; the cavalry bringing up the rear. A lieutenant and twenty men of our squadron were left in ambush, in a little ravine at hand, with orders to fall upon any of the foe who might come down as usual to the deserted camp to gather the leavings of the departed column.

We now came upon an open space, where were several huts constructed chiefly of the branches of the lentisk-tree: these were fired, burning with astonishing fury and crackling of leaves. A body of horsemen, perhaps incited by the columns of flame and vapour arising from these their pastoral abodes, descended towards us from the heights, as if with the intention of risking a charge; but a platoon of cavalry going forth to meet them half way, the defiance was rejected, and the gallant cavaliers scampered up the hill again, their white "burnooses" flying in the wind, and their cruel spurs punishing severely their more gallant steeds. The little body of troopers, placed in ambush, as we have seen, near the late bivouack, rejoined us in about half an hour, accompanied by four venerables on horseback, driving before them two *yoked oxen.* They were chiefs come down to tender submission to the Marshal; and the yoked oxen were brought as tokens of this submission. These truce-bearers

fell into the ambuscade on their way to overtake the column, and were upon the point of being cut down by the soldiers, who dashed out upon them; when the officer in command, observing their yoked oxen and their peaceable demeanour, saved their lives, and led them to the column. A considerable number of Kabaïles had come down to the deserted camp; but being mostly aged and unarmed, the honourable spirit of Lieutenant Lavigerie would not allow his men to stain their too-ready swords with the blood of such miserable victims.

By 11 o'clock our day's march was accomplished, having been en route some five hours, broken by several short halts. The bivouack was upon the borders of the "Oued Mansour," a considerable and rapid stream. Upon a height to our right, on the opposite side of the fertile valley watered by this river, was a large, compact, and well-built village, named "Mansour," or "The head of the brave." The tribe of the Oued-Mansour inhabit a considerable district, and are warlike and rich. Report said that upon a mountain in the background was a city of this tribe, with a population of eighteen thousand souls. Vis-à-vis to the town of Mansour, and upon the same side of the valley that we were,

was another considerable town: this was "Cherfa," a town of the Beni-Yala.

How pleasing the landscape overlooked by these Kabyle cities!— the fertile valley dividing them covered with fine crops of corn, the ground clean, and beautifully cultivated. Innumerable and gigantic olive-trees, some isolated, others clumped together, all most scientifically grafted by their owners, and producing the finest fruit, vary the low-lands, and adorn the slopes of the surrounding hills. The swift stream of the Oued-Mansour, meandering in its course to the foot of the bounding heights on either side, bears fertility upon its generous waters equally to all parts of the vale. The whole scene presents a glorious triumph of nature and of industry.

The Kabyle towns mentioned presented a very different appearance from the miserable gourbies we had before met with. In the distance the former had an air by no means inferior to many French or Italian villages. Indeed from their position they reminded me strongly of the latter. The buildings were evidently of stone; and the roofs of many of them, presenting regular gable ends, were tiled. In some cases a layer of mud was laid over the tiling to keep out the heat of the sun. We wished, some of us, to explore these comparatively civilized-looking abodes; but

the Marshal had wisely given strict orders that none should think of doing so; as no friendly approaches had been made on the part of the inhabitants. Indeed not a soul was to be seen. They might have been uninhabited for all we could tell. No curious eyes were gazing from the terraces upon what must have been to these wild mountaineers and their families a most novel scene, — the encampment of a Christian army within their hitherto unpolluted territories. This silence was alone sufficient to lead us to suspect that a storm was brewing, and that during the darkness of night it would burst forth. A remarkably fine crop of beans, close to our bivouack, fell victim to our horses and soldiers; the latter varying their soup with these palatable adjuncts. A good deal of fine corn, almost ripe, also lay heaped about the camp. The spot fixed upon for this bivouack was even more romantic and beautiful than that of the preceding night, and the portion assigned to the cavalry far pleasanter; numerous stones upon the ground having made us rise from our last couches very tender-ribbed. Indeed during the whole time the Marshal led the column, if there was a stony place to be found upon the appointed bivouack, the cavalry was doomed to occupy it; if there was a sunny place where the herbage

was scorched and burnt, there we found ourselves; the troopers cursing the hard soil as they hammered away at their tether-pins, and the horses snuffing the unprolific ground with evident mortification.

Wild blue pigeons abounded in the woods around us. It was not very safe, however, to wander far from the camp in pursuit of them. Nevertheless did shots echo on all sides, and several well filled game-bags were brought into the camp. The soldiers as usual laded themselves with fish from the river at hand; for the "glorious uncertainty" of angling was not to be mentioned here. There was also good bathing at this bivouack, but somewhat dangerous for those who could not swim. A Piedmontese officer had a narrow escape; for finding himself out of his depth, and being too much of a hero to shout for assistance, he disappeared beneath the surface once or twice; the admiring spectators gazing with delight upon what they regarded as aquatic feats; until the last dive lasting rather longer than the law of nature allowed, two soldiers plunged into the stream, and brought our friend out in a most dubious state.

The sun had hardly set, and sportsmen and bathers regained the camp, when a hue and cry,

accompanied with various symptoms of an animated chase, rang through the groves at hand. It appeared that one of the "burnoosed" gentry in our neighbourhood had ventured to indulge his pilfering propensities even at this early hour. Having crept stealthily through the brushwood, and attained the rear of the tent, he coolly cut the canvass with his knife, and, inserting his hand, laid hold of a sabre. Now the owner, sitting upon his canteen wrapped in meditation and the sweet fumes of his evening pipe, beheld with astonishment his side-arms gradually gliding beneath the canvass of his tent, and ultimately altogether disappearing. Suspecting that an earthly agent was implicated, he dashed forth, gaining the back of the tent in time to catch sight of the robber retreating into the brushwood; and chase being given, he returned with his sabre in one hand and the delinquent's ghastly head in the other.

The night passed without any further disturbance of note. A single shot ever and anon broke for an instant the silence of darkness, betokening that neither sentinels nor Arabs were asleep. One of the former was shot dead upon his post; and one of the latter awoke us about three in the morning with the most fearful screeches. It seemed that he had had a design upon

our horses, tethered as usual close to the tent; but a sentinel firing upon him broke his leg; thus marring both his purpose and his chance of running away. As the wretch lay writhing on the ground the Frenchman endeavoured to cut his head off, mindful of the ten franks it represented: but the miserable owner, though sorely wounded, refused to part with it, struggling furiously for life with horrible yells of mingled fear, rage, and despair. A bayonet-thrust in the body at last relieved him from his torture, and the soldier took possession of his prize, stripping the body at the same time of its burnoose, and narrowly searching for any money concealed upon it; for it is very common with the Kabaïles to carry money about them, either concealed in a kind of felt skull-cap which some of them wear, or in a belt around the waist.

A rather serious accident also happened towards morning. A brigadier, going his rounds to relieve the sentinels, having in the darkness wandered outside of the lines, came suddenly upon a sentinel, who, seeing two figures approaching the camp through the brushwood, fired, and with good effect; for, having charged with two bullets instead of one, the brigadier was brought into camp with his thigh broken, and a soldier at his side with his arm in the

same state. Such mistakes occurred several times during the expedition; and it was generally remarked that a sentinel was *sure* to hit a friend, though continually missing a robber enemy.

Adjoining the territory of the Oued-Mansour upon the east, and upon the same side of the Oued-Sahel or Oued-Mansour, is a vast extent of abrupt mountainous country inhabited by the tribe of the "Beni-Abbés." This tribe enjoys a great renown in the Kabylie, not for its warlike character alone, but also for industry and superior skill in the manufacture of gunpowder, arms, burnooses, &c. A portion of their territory lay now opposite our bivouack, and "El-Mokrani," (the influential chief we have before mentioned, and French khalif of the Medjanah, who was still with the column,) being deputed by the Marshal to hold council with the chiefs of this important tribe, had left the camp to do so, and even remained the night in one of their villages. But these sturdy mountaineers, in spite of El-Mokrani's urgent advice to them to tender submission to the Marshal, and to allow the column to traverse their territory in peace, in spite also of the warning given them of the disastrous consequences they would otherwise inevitably bring upon their heads,—warnings well backed by a

proclamation issued by the Marshal, and by threats fulminating the sword and fire for them and their possessions,—in spite of all this, they, placing too much confidence in their renown as warriors and their strength, refused submission, demanding at the same time, we are told, some thousand dollars for the right of passage for the column, with threats adjoined, that otherwise they would fall upon us and wipe us from the face of the earth; so that the camp of the Christian host should become "as the land which had been darkened by a flight of locusts," devoid of life. Their neighbours also, on the left bank of the river, the Beni-Yala, and the fierce "Beni-Ourlis," with other wild tribes, were stated to have joined in this warlike determination of the Beni-Abbés.

"Mourir pour son pays n'est pas un triste sort;
C'est s'immortaliser par une belle mort."

In a camp of their old enemies, the Turks, these terrible threats, smelling so strong of gunpowder and ugly knives, would have probably had the due effect. The dollars would have been paid down, or the crest-fallen troops would have backed out of the reach of such crusty fellows, and regained "Algiers the warlike," (as the Turks loved to call it) with the greatest possible

dispatch. It was far otherwise in the French camp. All were rejoiced that there was a chance of some warm work at hand. Both soldiers and officers were tired of so peaceful a promenade: something was desirable to break the monotony of eating dust, and sweltering beneath a hot sun so many hours a day. A smile of satisfaction passed throughout the troops, from our sturdy general to the coquettish "vivandière," whose jest and merry eyes so often cheer the weary foot-soldier upon the march.

A short time after the march was resumed, on the morning of the 15th, a deputation of chiefs and elders was seen to come forth from a Mansour village; some on horses, some on mules. They wound down the hills at a grave pace towards the column. The Marshal, with some of his staff, together with El-Mokrani and other Arab chiefs with us, met these worthies beneath an ancient olive-tree, the wide-spreading branches of which presented a grateful canopy against the heat of the sun. The conference lasted some time. Then the Marshal returned to the head of the column; and the shiekhs and elders, mounting with solemn visages, retired to their villages again. What was the effect of this interview did not transpire; but apparently nothing very satisfactory for either party.

Once more the trumpets struck up their lively and exciting airs, and the troopers burst forth in one wild chorus, as the ringing notes died off in soft repeated echoes amidst the neighbouring heights. Onward we marched, trampling beneath our feet vast extents of corn almost ready for the sickle: smiling fertility before us, — devastation in our rear. Every blade and every head of corn was crushed to earth. The march of eight thousand men, accompanied by hundreds of wild Arab cavaliers, dashing here and there, some playing the fantasia, others chasing at full speed the startled hare, or riding down red-legged partridges, leaves ugly tracks in a narrow cultivated valley. Game abounded here. Quails rose on all sides beneath our feet, followed by their lately hatched young. Many, in their fright and confusion, fell amongst the troops, who captured them alive, or knocked them down with sticks. The same fate often befel the hares. Partridges whirred from their nests, as the crushing host came on, and the "poule de Carthage" (or little bustard) roused from its solitude, took a long circuit on its heavy wings, dropping again in the high corn before us, again to be aroused. This bird is probably the "houbaraa," or "houbary," mentioned by Shaw as frequenting the desert. That traveller seems to have been only acquainted

with the larger species of the bustard, and considers Golius and Bockhart wrong in interpreting houbaraa as the bustard on account of its size, "it being at least twice the bigness of the houbaraa." The great bustard is so. This little bustard appears in the northern parts of Algeria, about the middle of June, though I have seen now and then one even in May. They are said not to breed there. They are difficult to approach, except in the great heat of the day during the hot months. The Arabs, however, manage to kill a good many, by using a panther's skin, behind which they walk as a stalking-horse. The birds then cluster together, and may be easily killed. This method is also employed by them, with considerable effect against the red partridges, which they also entrap by laying wait near the springs where they come down to drink.

A good many shots were fired upon the arrière-garde during the march this morning, but with little effect, most of them being sent from too great a distance even for the long barrels of the Kabyle gun to work much harm.

About 11 a. m. the halt was sounded in the middle of a fine piece of wheat, though we had advanced no more than two leagues since leaving the bivouack of the preceding night. All were,

however, rejoiced to find this was to be the termination of our march for that day, the heat being excessive. A space covered with brushwood, beyond which flowed the river over a shallow, stony bed, divided us on the South from the foot of the hills of the Beni-Abbés, many of whose snug-looking villages crowned the heights. To the North of the camp was a gradual slope up to the base of the hills of our old friends the Beni-Yala, some of whose strong-holds were also visible. To the North-west, overlooking the territory of these last, rose a lofty isolated mountain, rising into a cloud-piercing peak. This is "Djebel-ben-Thom," behind which extend, from East to West, the stern heights of the mighty Djurjura, the numerous summits of which were capped with glistening snow, defying the glowing sun. It may well be imagined with what longing eyes we gazed upon that pure snow; for the water of the river was tepid from the great heat, and the parched breath of a sirocco wind was upon us. A pleasant rill of cool and sweet water, flowing down from the Beni-Yala heights, traversed indeed the North end of the camp when we first bivouacked; but no sooner did those unamiable sons of the mountains perceive that there we were going to establish ourselves, than they cut it off, turning its course high up the hills. The

quarter of the camp occupied by the cavalry being fortunately nearest the river, we did not feel this loss so much; but for those in its neighbourhood it was annoying enough; and as they passed near our tents backwards and forwards seeking water at the river, toiling in the oppressive sun and wind, many a hearty curse did they bestow upon the crafty Beni-Yala.

CHAP. VI.

FORM AN ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE BENI-ABBÉS. — SKIRMISHERS. — PRISONER TAKEN. — FURIOUS NIGHT ATTACK. — "A MISS AS GOOD AS A MILE." — ATTACK THE HEIGHTS. — SACKING, BURNING, AND DESTROYING. — CAPTURE OF A JEW. — ATTACK OF THE LAST STRONG-HOLD. — A GALLANT WOMAN. — MASSACRE OF JEWISH ARTIZANS. — SUBMISSION OF TRIBE. — NORTH AFRICAN SAINTS, ETC.

THE hills of the Beni-Abbés, from the southern face of the camp, presented in the foreground a series of isolated monticules, mostly of a conical form, of very inconsiderable elevation, and covered with evergreen brushwood, intermingled with wild olive-trees. The little valleys intersecting these monticules, where *not* overgrown with brushwood, were cultivated with corn, with here and there fine grafted olive-trees overshadowing it. At the back of this foreground rose a semicircular range of heights of much greater elevation, and presenting, in many parts, abrupt precipices, like lofty walls, overlooking the valley upon which we were encamped. The firing of guns amongst these hills and rocks had been heard at intervals from an early hour,—

noisy signals of our approach, or tokens of bravado: or they may have been indeed symptoms of joy, the Kabyle regarding us as victims sent by Allah to be annihilated and plundered. "The stranger who penetrates into our country is sent by Heaven, it being the will of Allah that he should be despoiled by us." These disdainful mountaineers have indeed often threatened the French that they would send an army of old women of their tribes against them, "armed with sticks wherewith to chase you from Algeria;" and again, "You may sow your grain in the plain of the Metidja; but whenever it is our good pleasure we shall come down and reap it." During the Turkish dominion they more than once carried this threat into execution; but the renown of French arms, tales of French razzias, have reached their ears, at times, and rendered them rather less officious of late; they deeming it wiser for the most part to abide tranquilly in their mountain homes, "feeding fat" upon braggadocio, until actually bearded in their halls.

Facing the camp, and at the distance of about a mile, was one of the most lofty and extensive precipices; a stern barrier of perpendicular rock, with a remarkable mass rising from its summit at the eastern extremity, having in the distance

very much the appearance of one of those curious pyramidical tombs now and then to be met with amidst the mountains of ancient Numidia. Nature, however, had chiselled this from the solid foundation upon which it stood.

About 2 p. m., two large green banners were planted upon the ridge of this rugged height; and around these colours of the false prophet were grouped the shiekhs, the elders, and the wise men of the Beni-Abbés, whilst many hundreds of the tribe of inferior rank were gathered about and stationed along the edge of the precipice, watching the movements of the Christian army below. These wild warriors were all armed. Long guns bristled thickly upon the rock: old Spanish blunderbusses, pistols, the cruel Kabyle sword in its wooden sheath, carved and ornamented according to the taste of the owner, together with other rude but murderous weapons, were there.

Upon the summit of two mammelons, between the camp and this height, two strong French outposts were placed. The foe soon commenced trying the range of their guns upon these, firing every now and then a few scattered shots, accompanied with yells of defiance. Stealing about with my gun, between the outposts and the camp, in search of game, the whistle and pattering of

a bullet or two falling in my neighbourhood, warned me that a storm was at hand, and that this was the preface to warmer work. It was 4 p. m., however, before they showed any disposition to form a closer acquaintance with us. About that hour a volley was fired upon one of the outposts before mentioned, from the covert of a neighbouring mammelon, and at the same time the other outpost in that quarter received a few shots from skulking sharpshooters, who, after firing might be seen with their white burnooses crouching down in the brushwood, and gliding away to another spot, where from behind a rock or bush they would again fire, and then again shift their position. The French carbines soon cleared the mammelon, from whence the first volley had so unexpectedly come. Four Arabs alone were left there at last. These might be observed industriously firing and loading, in spite of the shower of bullets poured upon them, until one of them fell apparently mortally wounded, whom his comrades bore off in their arms, and away up the heights.

From this time until past 7 p.m. a dropping fire was kept up by sharp-shooters, thrown out on either side, playing at hide and seek with one another amongst the rocks and brushwood. It was an exciting pastime during these few hours

of daylight, watching the skirmishers on either side, as retiring or advancing in irregular lines each tirailleur on either side took advantage of such shelter as offered itself, and crouching behind the dark evergreens chose his aim, and delivered his shot as opportunity invited him. The Kabaïles are crafty skirmishers; but the Zouaves, of whom the advanced piquets on this side were chiefly composed, fully equal them, and, having more regularity and more effectual arms, continually drove them in.

A Kabyle prisoner was brought into the camp about six o'clock; or rather it may be said one who had every appearance of a Kabyle, for he proved to be a French deserter, who had for many years dwelt amongst this tribe. Having been taken "in flagrante delicto," fighting against his own countrymen, he was forthwith led outside of the camp and shot; though much useful information might have been obtained from him, in all probability, had he been spared, or spared for a time. This man was a thin, miserable-looking wretch, costumed in a filthy Kabyle tunic, reaching to the knees, his legs being bare, and his head shaved, excepting the "ketaïa," or tuft of hair left upon the crown of the head, by which the Kabyle expects to be hauled into paradise. It is to be supposed,

therefore, that he had become a proselyte to the Moslem faith. These fugitive deserters from the French (of whom there are many amongst different tribes), from the account of those who have been recaptured, or given up by their hosts, or who have returned in desperation, lead but a miserable life, whether they embrace Islamism or not; for in either case they are, with few exceptions, looked upon and treated with the utmost contempt by their captors.

The sun had now set; the short twilight was succeeded by darkness; the main bodies of the picquets herded around their watch-fires; whilst the advanced sentinels kept their dangerous guard. Ever and anon the wild blasts of the sirocco brought to our ears the yells of the Kabaïles, as they danced round huge fires lit upon the hills: for they had gathered together vast masses of brushwood, and their sombre forms might be distinguished, as they flitted about the flaming piles. Then, at intervals, from the gloomy slopes of the hills, flashes of fire burst forth, succeeded by dull reports, and the sharp rattle of French muskets, directed towards the spots from whence the Arab shots had proceeded.

All now was still for half an hour or more: the heavens glared with the mountain fires, but

not a yell or a shot was heard: it was a dead silence broken only by the sighing of the wind, as it swept across the camp in fitful gusts. This was but a suspicious lull, however; and about 8 p.m. the storm burst forth in all its fury. A hellish yell from a thousand throats at once, accompanied by furious volleys poured in from all sides, announced a combined and vigorous attack upon the various outposts. It was a glorious moment. The dark veil of night was rent by unceasing flashes of musketry; the fierce cries of the French soldiery mingled with the unearthly howls of their assailants, as the latter, baffled and repulsed by superior discipline and determination, were forced back into the covert; from whence again they would presently dash forth with renewed shouts, responding to the encouraging war-cries of their women, who, collected about the fires upon the heights, stirred up the fierce flames, singing the glorious deeds of the warriors of their tribe. In spite of their determined bravery, the outposts, after repeated and gallant struggles with their numerous foe, were compelled to fall back upon the "grand' gardes." This raised still more the spirits of the assailants, who, rushing madly on on every side, were only repulsed by vigorous and repeated charges of the bayonet.

About this time orders were issued for the tents to be struck, and the troops to lie on the ground; for showers of balls were whistling and falling in every direction, — sources of thoughtless mirth to those to whom they were not billeted; for every narrow escape, every shave of the whiskers from these leaden messengers of death, begot a volley of jests and sarcasms from the groups gathered about the smouldering camp-fires. En passant! one of these whistlers seemed to have been billeted for myself; for having rolled a stone near one of the fires to serve me for a pillow, my head was no sooner placed upon it than an envious Kabyle sent a bullet, which, striking the stone within a few inches of my pate, almost made me swallow the cigar in my mouth. Had it arrived a minute sooner, it would probably have gone through my head, which had been reposing upon the same spot before the luxury of a pillow had seduced me to seek the friendly aid.

About 9 p.m. orders were received for fifty troopers of our squadron to saddle, and be prepared to start upon a moment's notice. The intention of this order did not transpire; indeed it would have been a sad waste of life to have sallied forth, during the darkness, into a country covered with brushwood, and alive with the

enemy. The troopers saddled accordingly, and there remained, in statu quo, until past midnight. During all this time a hot fire and repeated attacks had been kept up. The atmosphere was laden with clouds of choking smoke, from the incessant pouring forth of gunpowder. But little loss was suffered in the camp; though it appeared afterwards, that the Kabaïles (from the fact of the troops lying down, and from the silence which prevailed in the camp,) imagined that they had pretty well accomplished their threat of "wiping us off the face of the earth." By one o'clock there were symptoms of the ammunition of our assailants becoming low, and of their being fatigued with their numerous and fruitless endeavours to break through the "grand' gardes." An occasional volley was still poured in; but as the moon rose the enemy gradually retired; a few only of the most adventurous hanging back, and taking parting shots. One of these, armed with a large brass blunderbuss, or Spanish "trabuco," loth to leave his slaughtered comrades until actually compelled, fired about the last shot, and closed this nocturnal attack with his life; for a French bullet passed through him, and a bayonet pinned him to the ground, almost as soon as he had pulled the trigger. His dying yell rang on high, and passed away

with the night-breeze, and all was again silent. "Those of our brothers who fall in defence of the true faith, are not dead, but live invisible, receiving their nourriture from the hand of the Most High," says the prophet.

Shortly before the break of day there was a general movement in the camp. Nevertheless great silence was preserved: not a trumpet was sounded; the words of command were passed down the ranks in a whisper; the column was marched to the opposite side of the river, and the baggage and "convoi" posted within a snug nook at the foot of the hills, and left under a strong guard. By half-past 4 a.m. eight battalions, "sans sacs," with some mountain guns, a small body of cavalry, and some hundreds of the "Goum Arabe," were toiling up the first heights, the Marshal having decided to attack and destroy the numerous towns of the Beni-Abbés, said to lie behind them.

The first movements of this column of attack were made in a very disorderly manner. The native tracks being exceedingly narrow and rocky, and the slopes covered with low brushwood, there was an extraordinary scrambling and jostling up hill and down hill of cavalry, infantry, and mules bearing the artillery; none seeming to be exactly aware of the intended

route, or in what manner to get out of his neighbours' way. As for myself, a mule laden with a gun sent me, horse and all, off the track, flying headlong down a steep slope, anathematising the prickly thorns of the wild jujeb. Then having presently scaled with the cavalry a height only intended for wild goats to climb, we had to descend again, which was still more hazardous; it proving to be merely an isolated mount, from the ascent of which no possible benefit could accrue. Shortly, however, the old Marshal galloped up, and things were brought to order.

We soon arrived near the base of two lofty ridges of rock, where, once more, the enemy presented themselves, assembled in vast numbers, commanding the pass with their long guns, and thinking there to cut us off. They opened fire immediately, but with little effect at first, on account of the distance; many of their balls falling dead amongst us. Onward we pushed, still somewhat embarrassed by the narrowness and rockiness of the track, which compelled us often to halt. A little ravine now presented itself, with the pathway on one side, just wide enough to pass along single file. To the left of this was a slope with some large olive-trees scattered upon it, and on the right a rough track covered with brushwood, and broken

by narrow ravines and mammelons. At this point the fire was hotter than ever: nothing was to be heard but the whistling of balls, and the echoing reports of guns. Here the cavalry and a battalion of Zouaves were obliged to draw off the pathway to allow the artillery to pass. We then formed amongst the olive-trees, and there remained about twenty minutes, offering a fine and immovable target to the Kabyle shots. Incessant showers of lead were consequently poured upon us, as, bowing to fate, we philosophically lighted our pipes, the enemy being quite out of our reach. In spite of this our unfavourable position, there were but few wounded, and one or two Zouaves killed. The olive-trees suffered indeed much more severely than ourselves, the twigs flying off in all directions, and many a ball being buried in their old trunks. One could but admire the "sang froid" of a very pretty "vivandière," who sat upon her horse, fully exposed to this fire, with her laughing face overshadowed by a little hat adorned with long feathers, cocked knowingly on one side, and jesting light-heartedly with those around her. There she sat, cavalier-fashion, with her canvass trousers and red tunic, evidently enjoying the excitement of the moment and the music of the bullets.

The twang of the Kabyle bullet is remarkably sharp, as it cuts through the air; one which struck the hilt of the sword of a Zouave close to me and then fell, I picked up: it proved to be of very small calibre, and cut all round, as if it had been carved out of a piece of lead with a knife. This uneven surface may account for their peculiar sound, and must render the wounds given by them more severe. The horse of my friend, the Count de Wys, received here a slight wound on the knee, from a ball which struck, first, part of the accoutrements of a Zouave just before us; thus the wound was fortunately very superficial.

As yet a French shot had not been fired; but now some tirailleurs and Zouaves were thrown out as skirmishers amongst the brushwood to the right, a column at the same time being sent to turn the heights. After a great deal of firing and skirmishing, the steady aim of the French sharpshooters, and the fear of being outflanked, forced the Kabaïles to desert the position for another height further on; though, with a little more determination, they might have long defended it, and with steady firing done much execution. However, steady firing does not appertain to the character of the Arab or the Kabyle. They fight and fly when pressed; then gather together, and fight again.

The Zouaves, with their leathern buskins and loose oriental trowsers, might now be seen occupying the summits of the precipices, which half an hour before were covered with Kabaïles, and the green bunting was no longer visible. How the Zouaves ever got there was surprising to those not acquainted with them; but these troops scale rocks with the agility of mountain goats, combining the utmost endurance with great hardiness and strength; for they are all picked men, and generally of rather short stature, broad-shouldered, deep-breasted, and bull-necked, —much more serviceable men for such fighting at all events than our six foot grenadiers.

The regiment of Zouaves was formed by general Clausel in 1830, and was originally composed wholly of natives of the country; but it consists now partly of French and partly of natives, chiefly indeed of the former. It is divided into three battalions, each of nine companies, and they have proved themselves as useful and effective troops as any in Africa. The oriental costume of these troops is picturesque and convenient: their arms consist of the musket, bayonet, and a short sword much resembling the ancient Roman sword. There are few affairs of any note in the history of the war in Africa, in which the Zouaves have not

distinguished themselves; they are, however, superlatively cruel, bloodthirsty, and eager for plunder; neither do they give nor obtain quarter. It was at the head of this determined corps of bravoes that the gallant Lamoricière first mounted the breach of Constantine, on the 13th October 1837, heedless of the desperate defence made by the Turkish and Kabyle garrison. It was in cheering them on during that murderous struggle that this talented officer, then their colonel, so narrowly escaped a hideous death from the explosion of numerous magazines, the fire from which, falling upon the bags of powder borne by the soldiers of the "génie," grievously wounded him, blew half his men into eternity, and rendered a portion of the venerable "Cirta" an infernal chaos of ruins, flames, and dying wretches, vainly struggling to draw their mangled bodies from the devouring fire.

Our column continued to advance at a rapid pace, the Kabaïles flying from height to height, pouring in at times heavy volleys; but at last falling back upon their villages, which now burst upon our sight. These villages were numerous, and generally situated upon commanding summits, the slopes, where possible, being cultivated with corn and olives. Lofty isolated towers, square at the base, then carried

up in an octagonal form, overlooked these villages from the hills around. These peculiar structures were probably holy places of resort during peace, and during war served for watch-towers and defence. From the loop-holes in them incessant shots were fired; but the garrisons soon were driven out by a few discharges from the "obusiers." Thus the first three or four villages were speedily deserted by those of the inhabitants who could fly, and those who could not were slaughtered.

Though the villages held out but a short time, yet the fugitives had not lost all hope. Sheltered amongst rocks, brushwood, and groves of olive-trees, they still annoyed much the advancing forces. One mount in particular, near the second village, they clung to very tenaciously, it commanding the passage to other settlements further on. The ascent of this mount was difficult; and the summit, crowned with masses of rough rock, intermingled with brushwood, sheltered the defenders from the repeated volleys directed against them. Captain Ducrot, a valuable officer of the 64th, was here severely wounded; for being ordered to turn this position, at the head of the Arab Goum, he galloped off to carry out the movement, imagining himself followed by those cavaliers. So he was for a short distance; but the

smell of powder proving offensive to their nostrils, they suddenly reined up their steeds, leaving the gallant captain to advance alone. From the flank of the hill several Kabaïles in ambush fired upon him, and a bullet traversed both his thighs, inflicting serious wounds, though fortunately breaking neither of the bones. The obusiers were now again brought into play, and congreves hissed through the air, producing the desired effect. No instrument of warfare is so much dreaded by these wild warriors as the obusier; they call it the *twice-firing cannon.* The explosion of the "obus" projected is terrific and unaccountable in their eyes. They watch its direction, and fly in desperation from the point where they suppose it may fall; neither will they after the explosion approach that spot again during the combat. One of the artillerymen was grievously wounded at this point by his own gun, from some carelessness in the loading.

During the attack upon this mammelon, I was sitting upon my horse looking down into a little ravine on my right, the rocky clefts and brushwood-clad sides of which had just been swept through by a company of the Chasseurs d'Orleans, when a Kabyle furtively crept forth from his hiding place; but catching a sight of me, bolted a short distance, then disappeared myste-

riously, diving in all probability into some cavity well known to him. He was not betrayed, or he would have soon been worried from his earth. Another, not so fortunate, broke cover in sight of the Arab Goum. Being somewhat a-head he ran well for his life, pursued by those fierce horsemen, who, dashing their long spurs into their steeds, chased him at full speed, with wild cries, firing upon the fugitive with their long guns. I hoped at one time he would gain a rocky ravine in front of him, for the balls cut the earth around him without hitting their mark: but the speed of his pursuers proved too great for him; he fell, cut down by a cavalier, within ten paces of the only chance he had for his life.

Still advancing by extremely rugged tracks, the rocks in some places forming perfect mountain-stairs, with deep ravines on one hand or the other, we came within sight of three villages lying close together, overlooked by a fourth in the background, crowning the very summit of an extremely lofty mount, — a spur in fact of a range of heights behind it, but presenting on our side a conical face of most difficult access, up which an Arab track, winding like a cork-screw, might be discerned, alive with numerous fugitives toiling towards the summit with slow

and difficult steps. Several towers in the neighbourhood of these villages were garrisoned with enraged mountaineers, thirsting for vengeance, but aware that their only hope lay in the commanding stronghold above-mentioned. Continual puffs of smoke issued from the towers, and bullets rattled about us. It was but a dying struggle! The villages in the foreground were soon gained, the troops advancing "au pas de course," as well as the nature of the country would permit. For the cavalry it was difficult enough, the slopes about these mountain-homes being divided into plots by low walls of loose rocks thrown together. Dashing the spurs into our horses' flanks, upward we drove, however, at a heavy gallop, every man following according to the ability of his steed. Some cleared the rocky divisions; some floundered over them; others bit the dust, horse and rider, but always on the right side. More than one thick-pated trooper will long remember how he tried the metal of the rock with his skull that day. It was a hard ride, but an exciting one.

The villages were all surrounded with walls of about twelve feet in height, and composed of stones cemented together with mud mingled with chopped straw, a strong fence of thorny bushes crowning them, and impenetrable hedges of the prickly pear growing along their base. The

inhabitants fired chiefly from the loop-holes pierced in these walls and in the walls of the houses. Upon the terraces of the latter also might be seen picturesque groups of gaunt warriors, their flowing burnooses thrown back as they handled with activity their long guns. In one of these last villages some half-dozen of them boldly remained, after the great body of their comrades had fled, in a large square building commanding the entrance of the village on the side we approached, and kept up a determined fire at "bout portant." It was all to no avail, however; the narrow streets were soon crowded with French troops, ravishing, massacring, and plundering on all sides. Neither sex nor age was regarded; the sword fell upon all alike. From one house blood-stained soldiers, laden with spoil, passed forth as I entered it. Upon the floor of one of the chambers lay a little girl of twelve or fourteen years of age: there she lay, weltering in gore and in the agonies of death: an accursed ruffian thrust his bayonet into her. God will requite him. In another house a wrinkled old woman sat crouched upon the matting, rapidly muttering, in the agony of fear, prayers to Allah, with a trembling tongue. A pretty child, of six or seven years old, laden with silver and coral ornaments, clung to her side, her eyes streaming with tears as she

clasped her aged mother's arm. The soldiery, mad with blood and rage, were nigh at hand. I seized the fair child: a moment was left to force her into a dark recess at the far end of the building; some ragged matting thrown before it served to conceal her; and whilst I was making signs to her mother to hold silence, soldiers rushed in: some ransacked the habitation; others pricked the old female with their bayonets. "Soldiers, will you slay an aged woman?" "No, monsieur," said one fellow, "we will not kill her; but her valuables are concealed, and we must have them."

In nearly every house were vast jars of oil (for the Kabaïles make, consume, and sell vast quantities,) often six or seven feet in height, and ranged in rows around the chambers. Holes being rapped in all these jars, the houses were soon flooded with oil, and streams of it were pouring down the very streets. When the soldiers had ransacked the dwellings, and smashed to atoms all that they could not carry off, or did not think worth seizing as spoil, they heaped the remnants and the mattings together, and fired them. As I was hastily traversing the narrow streets to regain the outside of the village, disgusted with the horrors I witnessed, flames burst forth on all sides, and torrents of fire came swiftly gliding down the thoroughfares; for the

flames had gained the oil. An instant I turned, the fearful doom of the poor concealed child and the decrepid mother flashing on my mind. It was too late; who could distinguish the house amongst hundreds exactly similar? The fire was crackling, blazing, with increased fury, and there was no time to lose. The way of the gateway was barred with roaring flames. Scrambling to the terrace of a low building I threw myself over the wall. The unfortunate Kabyle child was doubtless consumed with her aged parent. How many others may have shared her fate!

In some of these villages my attention was attracted by vast coffers of walnut wood, handsomely carved, and richly ornamented. These were in the houses, probably, of "tholbas" (learned men); for they were full of books and bundles of manuscripts. The destructive soldiery fired these remarkable cases, tearing the contents to pieces; the streets being in some parts strewed with the torn fragments. One work alone I saved, from a coffer, which was at the time in flames at one end. The Arabs of the Goum saved others, and preserved them with the greatest care; but hundreds of curious works were sacrificed. The one which fell to me was in a goat-skin bag, tied with a green silk cord and tassel; — it proved to be a Koran. It would have been better to have

secured some of the loose manuscripts, which might perhaps have been written in that ancient Berber dialect spoken by these mountain-tribes. The Koran which I thus obtained is in Arabic, and a note upon one of the fly-leaves of it, inscribed by an ancient proprietor of this "holy" book, may not be uninteresting perhaps. The following is from a translation given me in French by a taleb of the chief mosque at Algiers, who offered me two hundred francs for the book; "For," said he, "I do not like so holy a book to be in the hands of a Christian."

"May God pardon in his mercy the writer of these lines, a sincere believer! Praises to the All High God! Praises let there be to our Lord Mahomet, his family, and those of his blood! Salutation! Witness, the brother el Hadji [the writer had performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and thus gained the title of *Hadji*, or *Pilgrim*], the undersigned, Sidi Haboulekadem, son of Mahomet-el-Makdaoui, the owner of this book, after having acquired it by lawful purchase of its owner, has instituted a usufruct in favour of him who will make use of it for reading, of him, of his children, and of their children; upon condition that they preserve it with care; of them who abandon it God will demand account; he will demand of them justice. In doing this, the undersigned considers it as a charitable action, and no more than his duty. Hoping that God in his generosity will assist him to accomplish his purpose, he declares himself also responsible for the others (*those who inherit it?*). Salutation! Signed by the writer of these lines with his own mortal hand; Mohammed-el-Saïd-ben-Mohammed-el-Makdaoui; at the date

of the commencement of Djoumad, the second of the year ١٥٤٩. God will teach us his goodness, and will guard us against all evil. Amen."

Christian reader! admire the fervid piety, the holy regard for the sacred writings of his prophet, evinced by this worthy Moslem, Sidi Haboulekadem. Little did he dream that the cloud of adversity would lower so darkly over those to whom he bequeathed this precious work! Little did he think that the defiling hand of a Christian would be permitted to tear it from its coffer! Many a bitter lamentation has since been poured forth upon the devastated hills of the Beni-Abbés, mourning the loss of this venerable volume. Weeping mothers have sought, amidst the smouldering ruins of their once tranquil homes, their slaughtered children: with no less bitterness of heart have the holy marabbutts sought for the remnants of their sacred writings; so deep is the veneration of the Moslem for his religion.

It was now about mid-day. The heat being excessive, and the sirocco wind still blowing, the fatigue of the troops may be imagined. Some of the men had even fallen insensible, totally overcome by the extreme toil, the excitement, and the oppressive temperature. A short halt was ordered. The lofty and picturesque towers in the villages and their neighbourhood were mined

and blown up. It was a fine but sorrowful sight to behold these peculiar and characteristic structures successively leap in the air in one vast mass; then come thundering down, blown into a thousand fragments; the mountains echoing and re-echoing the fearful explosion. The atmosphere was laden with clouds of smoke wafted from the numerous villages now enveloped in flame. From one spot nine of these might be counted furiously burning; and the crashing of falling habitations resounded in our ears.

The cavalry halted upon a fine piece of wheat. Beneath the shade of some olive-trees we took a hasty breakfast; for nothing but gunpowder had we swallowed that morning. The soldiers tore open the numerous goat-skins brought out of the sacked villages,—receptacles for butter, milk, figs, or flour. The latter was chiefly strewed upon the ground; but the others proved acceptable prizes.

From the blazing village close to which this halt took place, a Kabyle, driven forth from some hiding-place by the flames, fell into the hands of the soldiers. Dragging the trembling wretch along, they pricked and threatened him with their swords; then forcing him down upon the stump of an olive-tree, they were upon the point of cutting off his head; but an officer interfering,

he was led before the Marshal; and the chief, El Mokrani, proving him, by the hair upon his head, to be a mere Jewish artizan, it was said that he was released; though, from the manner in which he was led away, surrounded with tormentors thirsting for his blood, it is more than probable that he found his liberty in death. An old French deserter, also captured here, hoped to soften his compatriots' hearts by craving mercy in his native tongue; but he was sorely in error; for the soldiers immediately slung him up by the neck to the branch of a tree. I did not see this, but was informed by a private that such was his fate.

During the halt immense numbers of chickens were captured or killed; for, being driven out of the villages by the fire, they ran here and there, chased by the soldiers with their drawn sabres, furiously cutting at them. Some sought refuge in the vast hedges of prickly pear, but to no avail; for, driven out with stones or sticks, few escaped the weapons of their pursuers. Pigeons, also, of a remarkably large breed, wheeled about in large flocks, seeking in vain a resting-place upon the burning buildings. Numbers of these were shot by those who had brought fowling-pieces with them.

There still remained one more village at hand

to be stormed; it was that one mentioned as occupying so commanding a position. It being out of the question for the cavalry to mount the height, and the attempt being moreover perfectly unnecessary, they remained where they were, and three small columns of infantry, composed of the Zouaves, the Chasseurs d'Orleans, and the "Tirailleurs Indigènes," were led to the attack. The defence made here was more obstinate than in the former villages; for this was the forlorn hope of the enemy; this was the point whither the fugitives had fled, and the only place of refuge left for their wives and families. Congreves hissed through the air, and burst over the doomed stronghold, doing considerable execution; yet did the defenders pour down from the terraces of their houses an incessant fire upon the ascending troops, who advanced, however, with the utmost intrepidity, throwing forward clouds of skirmishers, firing in return as best they could, and toiling onward perseveringly towards the summit, though frequently obliged to use both hands and knees in their progress. One Zouave, whom I happened to be remarking, zealously labouring upwards to the attack, received a ball, apparently in his head; for, leaping from the ground, he fell over backwards, and made a series of somersaults down the ascent into a ravine below.

Finding their enemies rapidly gaining the height, and that one detachment was upon the point of taking them in the flank, the Kabaïles might now be seen retreating in stern despair from the village, turning and firing at intervals as they retired to the heights beyond. Two or three of the soldiers, mounting to this attack, fell dead struck by no ball. Desperate exertion and intense heat had killed them. The summit once attained, however, the lust of plunder gave strength to the troops; and dashing over the walls and through the gateways, the scenes which had taken place in the villages below were again acted over, but with increased attendant horrors; for was it not the refuge of the women and the aged? Ravished, murdered, burnt, hardly a child escaped to tell the tale. A few of the women fled to the ravines around the village; but troops swept the brushwood; and the stript and mangled bodies of females might there be seen.

An instance of feminine daring worthy of record was reported to have taken place in this village. A soldier entering a house for plunder found there a Kabyle; rushing on to cut him down, a woman came forth, and shot the soldier dead with a pistol. A curious instance of sang-froid on the part of an aged woman, during

these scenes of blood, is also remarkable. Massacring, burning, and plundering going on around her, she still sat coolly in her dwelling hard at work, making cous-coussou, and paying no sort of attention to anything but her seething-pot. Most fortunately for this old hag, an officer was the first who came upon her; and, struck with her extraordinary conduct, made prisoner of her as a curiosity; yet was she very savage at being disturbed during her culinary operations; and it required considerable effort to tear her from her pots and pans to save her life. Some Israelitish artizans, workers in silver and in iron, trusting to their black turbans and their unwarlike character for mercy, fled not upon the taking of this village. It was false confidence; for the soldiers, neither distinguishing nor wishing to distinguish them from Moslems, fell upon and slew them.

Now the great chief of the Beni-Abbés, Hamou Tahar, perceiving that all hope was lost, — that the power of his arms was as nothing in the eyes of the Christian host,—that the pride of his warriors were slain, and his most beautiful villages enveloped in fire, bowed to destiny; and, standing forth upon a height with a flag of truce, he was led before the Marshal, signified the submission of his tribe, and prayed earnestly a cessation of

hostilities. "Alas!" cried the chief, "our prophets prophesied evil unto us; yet, heedless of the words of our wise men, we rushed on to battle, and justly are we chastened. O great shiekh of the Christians, recal your men of might; sheath again the sword of vengeance: by the rising of to-morrow's sun, the chiefs and elders of the Beni-Abbés shall all bow down before you. You will command that which seemeth good in your eyes, and we will obey."

The severe countenance of our general-in-chief regarded with a stern eye the fallen shiekh; for the struggle had been obstinate, and much valuable blood had been shed. Moreover report stated that there was a still larger and stronger town further amongst the mountains, whither many of the best warriors of the tribe had retired, with the intention of defending it to the utmost. Nevertheless, as he gazed around him, and beheld, on the right hand and on the left, nothing but blazing villages and devastated lands, his heart relaxed. Thrice successively the booming of a gun was heard rolling amidst the hills of the Beni-Abbés,—a signal that the submission was accepted. The shrill trumpets loudly and repeatedly sounded the recall; and the troops, eagerly engaged in sacking the last village, unwillingly came forth, burthened with spoil.

One vast sheet of flame crowned the height, which an hour or two before was ornamented with an extensive and opulent village, crowded with inhabitants. It seemed to have been the very emporium of commerce of the Beni-Abbés; fabrics of gunpowder, of arms, of haïks, burnooses, and different stuffs were there. The streets boasted of numerous shops of workers in silver, workers in cord, venders of silks and other stuffs, and articles of French or Tunisian manufacture, brought by their traders from Algiers or Tunis. All that was not borne away by the spoilers was devoured by fire, or buried amidst the crashing ruins; and then the hungry flames, vomited forth from the burning habitations, gained the tall corn growing around these villages, and, running swiftly on, wound about and consumed the scattered olive-trees overshadowing it. Fire covered the face of the country, and the heavens were obscured with smoke.

The soldiers pronounced the country "joliment nettoyé;" and I heard two ruffians, after the sacking was over, relating, with great gusto, how many young girls had been burnt in one house, after being abused by their brutal comrades and themselves. They pronounced that house "joliment nettoyé" also. Indeed it was a very favourite phrase with them.

The amount of spoil was very great this day. Considerable sums of money had been discovered also by the soldiers. The Arab Goum were the most greedy plunderers: their horses tottered beneath immense piles of burnooses, carpets, guns, &c., with perhaps two or three kids tied down on the top, and numerous chickens suspended by the legs at the sides. From every saddle, indeed, hung some half-dozen fowls; above two thousand, it was said, were brought away all together. The camp, which we reached in the early part of the evening, became like a large fair. Buying and selling was going on on all sides. Burnooses, of the value of forty or fifty francs, were sold for five or six francs; common Arab guns fetched about two francs a-piece; whilst others, richly ornamented with silver and coral, were sold for twenty or thirty francs. At Algiers the same would have been valued at three or four hundred. Amongst other things, great numbers of cartouches were found; and the powder being extremely fine it was generally believed that it was of English manufacture,—an idea readily accepted, and bitterly harped upon; but the Kabaïles make fine powder themselves, and this was most probably of home manufacture. Vast quantities of silver ornaments, such as ear-rings, brooches, bracelets,

and massive anklets, were selling at far less than their value in weight. Amongst these female ornaments might be observed little silver boxes containing amulets, which are worn by the women, attached to the neck by chains composed of beads, coral, ancient Spanish brass buttons, different coloured pebbles, glass, &c.

Great faith is placed in amulets by all Arabs, who purchase them of their marabbutts and wise men for some ten or twelve sous a-piece. Those afflicted with any disease are often laden with them; thus an Arab, who was admitted some time back to the hospital at Algiers with diseased eyes, wore upon his forehead fourteen amulets suspended to the camel-hair rope around his head.* They were of skin, covered with magic squares, cabalistic signs, ciphers arranged in tables, and lines of Arabic writing. Thus on one was inscribed: "In the name of God, the merciful and all pitying! may the All High be propitious to our lord Mahomet, his family, and his relatives!" Then succeeds a portion of the Koran, where God speaks to Mahomet: "By

* This superstitious regard for amulets, as we all know, pervaded in olden times even the civilised nations of England and France. Thus Catherine de Médicis, the Queen of France, wore upon her abdomen a piece of skin covered with cabalistic signs, prepared by Nostradamus, and said to have been taken off a murdered infant.

the Koran, the book of wisdom, thou art numbered amongst the divine ambassadors, and thou walkest in a straight way. It is a revelation which the glorious and merciful spirit has made unto thee, in order that thou mayest warn thy people of that of which their fathers have been warned, and upon which they think little. Our word has been pronounced against the greater part amongst them; yet will they not believe it. We have charged their necks with chains which bind the chin; so that they are no longer able to raise the head. We have placed a barrier before them, and a barrier behind them. We have covered their eyes with a veil, and they see not. . . . . In the name of God, by God, there is no other God but God; there is no strength but in God the Most High," &c. An Arab going forth upon a long journey, or to war, consults without fail the marabbutts of his tribe, who deal forth advice and talismans, which latter the cavaliers attach to the neck of their horses. These saints, who often inherit their saintships from their fathers (for holiness is hereditary amongst this strange people), spend the greatest part of their lives in prayer, meditation, and ecstatic convulsions, during which latter state they devour fire, glass, metal, &c., &c., and work various miracles. Some prophesy, but not all. Those who are thus

gifted are immensely esteemed. They are always much better instructed than the rest of their tribes, and generally the only persons who can write, and calculate with figures. They also instil into youthful minds the principles of their religion, holding schools for that purpose. Many of them are brave and fiery warriors in time of need, and have often been observed by the French to expose themselves in a most daring manner, wishing to be believed immortal. When death does overtake one of these holy men, he is buried beneath a white-domed mausoleum; lamps are suspended from the roof; the wise men resort there to meditation; and the criminal flies there for safety; for it is an inviolable place of refuge. At some of the most celebrated of these sainted tombs, young lions are said to have been tamed by the devotees residing in them, and are looked upon with great veneration, partaking of the sanctity of the defunct. I myself, however, have never met with any of these feline saints.

As an instance of the great confidence placed in these marabbutts, may be cited an incident which took place in July of last year (1846). One of these saints foretold the taking of Tlemcen from the French, sending word, at the same time, to General Cavaignac, who held it, that the sooner he returned to France the better, and

that if he did not immediately evacuate the city he should come on such a day and take it. On the day named eight hundred Arab horse and twelve hundred infantry appeared in the neighbourhood of the town. Their chief told them that the town would now be evacuated. His words proved correct to a certain extent, as General Cavaignac sallied forth with his troops to meet the enemy. The expectant Arabs stood their ground in perfect tranquillity, as the French approached; for their marabbutt said that the earth would presently open and swallow up the French general with his forces. Patiently the infatuated Moslems waited to behold the consummation of the miracle; when suddenly the veil was torn from their eyes: the French trumpets sounded the charge; the cavalry came thundering down upon the astonished Arabs, standing like sheep for the slaughter, and they were sabred almost to a man.—Again, a celebrated marabbutt, of the province of Oran, informed his tribe that on a certain day the French muskets could not be fired, and that they would then go forth and take possession of a certain fort in the neighbourhood held by the French. The day arrived; a troop of sixty Arabs were beheld by the sentinels of the garrison approaching the fort playing the fantasia. Their cries of joy and

amity rang on high, mingled with the sound of the "tam-tam," and other musical instruments. The admiring sentinels at the gateway of the fort were hailed by them as friends, and, considering them as such let them pass into the fort, not discovering their error until the cold yatagans of the cavaliers in the rear cleft through their brains. The French guard hastily turned out. Onward the treacherous Moslems dashed, cutting down a brigadier and several men. A musket was aimed at the breast of a cavalier, and the trigger pulled; but it would not go off. The cavaliers cried aloud, "Behold, the words of our prophet are true!" and rushing onwards had almost taken the fort by surprise, when volley after volley was opened upon them; horse and man fell beneath the fire; every one of them was slain, and their bodies were cast into the ditch around the walls within an hour of their entering the fort. Several accidents having taken place, from the carelessness of the French soldiers with their muskets when on guard, the percussion-lock having been lately introduced amongst them, orders had been issued that the "piston," or capsule, should not be applied by them, except when danger was at hand. The cunning marabbutt had doubtless found this out by some means, and made the above use of his discovery.

The loss sustained by the French, during the night attack of the Beni-Abbés and the storming of the heights the ensuing day, amounted, according to the Marshal's report, to fifty-seven killed and wounded. Amongst the latter were five officers. The enemy, by their own account, had thirty-six killed during the night, one of whom was a shiekh of note. As for their loss during the day it must have been considerable. The number did not transpire, and it is impossible for their opponents to give even a rough guess; for as soon as an Arab warrior falls in combat he is drawn away by his comrades, and jealously concealed until the affair is over, when they are carefully interred in the same state in which they fell, not being washed and enveloped in linen, as those who die by an ordinary death are; such purifications not being necessary with those who gloriously fall in defence of the true faith; for has not the Prophet said: "Bury the martyrs as they fall, with their clothes, their wounds, and their blood; wash neither their bodies nor the wounds upon their bodies; for there shall exhale from them, on the day of judgment, a perfume sweet as musk"? As for signs of the slain, excepting the bodies of women and children, little was to be seen; unless it was here and there a burnoose covered with gore,

which had been evidently thrown aside to facilitate escape with the dead body it once covered.

The Moslem heroically stifles his regret for the loss of brethren slain in defence of his creed. "The All High recalls the spirit of life when it seems good unto him; we must all yield it at some period, and we can but once do so." Moreover, he faithfully believes that the gates of Paradise are never barred to those who die in battle. "Young and old, great and little, march forth to the holy war! consecrate your life and your possessions to the defence of the true faith! . . . . Those whose feet are covered with dust in the cause of God, God will preserve from everlasting fire."

As for lamentations and weepings in the French camp, for comrades sacrificed upon the altar of "La Gloire," they were not in vogue at all, and any symptoms of regret were soon drowned in the wine-cup. "Ah dam! aujourd'hui lui, demain moi!—Hazard de la guerre?"

"A vaincre sans péril on triomphe sans gloire."

The shiekh Hamou Tahar, together with two or three other men and three women, were, I believe, the only prisoners brought to the camp. One woman had the lower portion of her face blown away by a congreve,—a hideous wound.

During the day the distant firing of guns had

been heard many times, which proceeded (as was supposed by us at the time) from an attack upon the column of General Bedeau, who, traversing the mountains from the French post of Setif, at the head of six thousand men, to form a junction with the column under Marshal Bugeaud, was fallen upon by the tribe of the "Reboulas," excited to arms by a celebrated cherif, one Muley-Mohammed, who had long kept the Kabyle tribes about Setif in a state of excitement.

We lay this night in perfect tranquillity. Not a shot was fired; not a robber ventured down to the camp. The day's *man-hunt* (for it was little else) was over, and the exhausted dogs of war lay stretched upon the ground,—

"The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die."

CHAP. VII.

PROCESSION OF SUBDUED PATRIOTS. — PROCLAMATION LATELY ISSUED BY THE EMIR. — A WORD UPON THE CHARACTER OF THE WARFARE.

HARDLY had the rising sun of the ensuing morning tinted with its roseate hue the snow-capped peaks of the lofty Djurjura, when a long and mournful procession might be seen descending at a solemn pace the romantic hills of the Beni-Abbés. Now does it arrive at the entrance of the little mountain basin, where are clustered the thousand tents of the Christian host. The hardy Zouaves on the outposts scoff at the downcast cavaliers, as onward they proceed with heavy steps towards the tent of the French General. The hearts of those composing it are sorrowful; for, like their brethren of the plain, they are compelled to bow the head to the superior might of their foes; yet is there a glimmering of hope within their breasts, as they murmur words of consolation one to the other. "The cloud of adversity is now upon us; our prophets have foretold it; but when the sun

of prosperity once more shines forth, when the triumph of Islamism can be assured, shall we not raise our heads more proudly than ever? There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet!"

The cavaliers composing this procession were the shiekhs and elders of the different fractions of the Beni-Abbés, which powerful tribe is said to count in all a population of forty thousand souls. Hamou Tahar presented these, his chiefs, to the Marshal. Red burnooses and silver-ornamented arms of investiture were presented them, — symbols of vassalage to the French. An organisation of the tribe was adopted by the Marshal, and the whole was placed under the authority of the kalifat of the Medjana, our old friend Sidi-Ahmet-ben-Mohamed-el-Mokrani. An annual impost of fifty thousand francs was then affixed; but upon the earnest entreaties of Hamou Tahar and his brother chiefs, pleading the immense losses they had sustained, the utter destruction of their crops, &c., &c., the Marshal dispensed with the payment of tribute for this year. Thus did this great tribe, whose superior might in arms and industry had yielded them the sway over a vast and fertile extent of country, acknowledge themselves vassals to the Christian, — tributaries to the French. The superior saga-

city of their wise-men forewarned them of their fate, but in vain. They fought in a glorious cause — for their liberty and their creed; yet would they have acted far more wisely to have entered into an accommodation, and allowed us to pass in tranquillity, unless they had determined to defend their homes far more bravely than they did. Had they fought with any daring, half the attacking column must inevitably have been lost. Had they defended their villages with any pertinacity, nothing less than blockading them, cutting them off from the fountains below, &c., would have caused them to fall into the hands of the enemy. Had the last village in particular been defended in a really determined manner, the Marshal might have sat down before it for some time, singing his favourite distich —

> " Savez-vous pour la gloire oublier le repos,
> Et coucher en plein air, le harnais sur le dos?"

As it was, it fell before the usual impetuosity and gallantry of the French soldiers, who are worthy of nobler foes than such as trust only to the length of their guns and legs.

The submission of this great tribe (like that indeed of all the African tribes ostensibly subject to or allied with the French) will doubtless prove a mere temporal subjection; for, as we have said, the French invasion is looked upon as a mere

passing cloud, and the Moslem only "bides his time." He is confident the day will come when "the triumph of Islamism can be assured." Moreover, the stirring proclamations of the ex-Emir, Abd-el-Kader, still ring in their ears, and foster hate for the Christian in their hearts. The character of these exciting appeals to the "sons of the faithful," and the effect they may produce, may be judged of by the following proclamation, distributed by Abd-el-Kader throughout the country, from the confines of Morocco to the "tomb of the seven sleepers," as a preface to the daring sweep he made in the latter part of the year before last from West to East; when he actually appeared with a body of cavaliers within forty miles of the city of Algiers itself, much to the terror of the gallant "garde national" of that town, and its vicinity.

"Read! O Moslems, read! Now dash from your eyes that blindness into which your intercourse with infidels has plunged you! Behold their perfidious craft! judge them by their deeds!

"When the French desired your submission to them, they said unto you, 'Submit to us, and we will guarantee unto you the enjoyment of your religion, your possessions, your wives, and your children. Your own chiefs shall govern you. In no way will we interfere with your customs, and your laws shall be respected. Our only desire is to watch over you, — to see that you are justly governed, and that you may no longer be victims to those exactions

which weighed upon you so heavily under the dominion of your ancient Sultan Abd-el-Kader.'

"Sons of the Faithful! you believed these lying words, and submitted to the infidel. Immediately that the impious Christian believed himself strong, and that I for a short period had disappeared from amongst you, he hastened to sacrifice his promises. Has he not applied your mosques to profane purposes? Has he not seized your fattest lands, and given them to his own people? Has he not paid for with money the ravished virtue of your women? Has he not enrolled your children in his abominable cohorts? Has he not freed those slaves whom it was the will of God we should possess? Has he not arrogated the right to administer justice amongst you? Has he not persecuted your most noble families, and set aside your chiefs, to replace them by infamous Moslems, whom he has bought with his gold? Your nobles and your marabbutts, who have as fools served him with fidelity, have received for their reward an eternal prison in the land of the Christians! You are now ruled by Roumis, judged by Roumis, administered to by Roumis. And to prove more visibly still, how perfidious are his intentions, behold, he comes to count your warriors, your women, and your children, even as a master counts his sheep which he goes forth to sell at the market! Notwithstanding the mission which God has given me to battle with the infidel unto the last drop of my blood, I have given him some repose; I have departed from the theatre of war, *feeling assured that the Christian will destroy himself by his own evil works.*

"The day of awakening is at hand. Arise ye, arise ye at my voice, O Moslems! God has again placed in your hands his flaming sword, and we go forth to fertilise the plains of our country with the blood of the infidel!"

The passage in this most characteristic proclamation, where the Emir refers with such

offended feelings to the numbering of the people, is a remarkable instance of the handing down of ancient oriental tradition. "The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, *number* Israel and Judah." . . . "And David's heart smote him after that he had *numbered* the people. And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done," &c. The Arab considers it not only as an unwarrantable profanation of the privity of his home, especially with regard to the women, but also as a sign of confidence in earthly force instead of in the God of battles.

The French in Africa have frequently been declared guilty, by the great tribunal of the world, of unwarrantable barbarities. Their expeditions and their razzias are spoken of with execration. "Enormous and frightful excesses, for no discoverable or defensible object, filling us with melancholy and disgust," are said to have been committed. I will express my own views upon this subject; feebly perhaps, but candidly, and careless of the world. Let us bear in mind that *nations*, as well as individuals find it a delightful pastime to anatomise and harp upon, with no favourable feelings, the mote in their brother's eye! Heaven forbid that I

should stand forth to justify uncalled-for acts of cruelty! Many such have doubtless been committed by the French arms in Africa,—and many have been committed by British arms in other countries; nor are they the less reprehensible for that. History proves that from the earliest ages of the world to the present time the "*God of armies*" has ordained that the progress of nations should be traced in blood. It is one of the miseries entailed on fallen human nature. The horrors attendant upon the attack on the Beni-Abbés, doubtless will arouse feelings of generous indignation in the breasts of those who may peruse these pages. Reader, *my* blood boiled in my veins more than once that day; and so did the blood of many a gallant French officer. Scenes indeed took place, during that affair, even far more abominable than any here related; neither are they kept back from any feeling of delicacy with regard to my French friends, ("rien n'est beau que le vrai,") but merely because the relation of them might prove offensive to the generality of readers.

War is always more or less repulsive with horrors, according to the object desired, and the character of the people engaged in the struggle. In the present case, the army of a civilised nation is in conflict with a people of the most

barbarous character. Now the ranks of the French army in Africa are composed, in great measure, of the very scum of France, intermingled with allies of the same blood, religion, and ferocity as those with whom they are struggling. The difficulties of restraining such troops may account for many atrocities committed by them, as offensive to the chivalrous officers often found in command of them, as to the world at large. There are certainly instances where the officers in command are as brutal as the soldiery, from whose ranks they have risen; and it is to be lamented: in other cases, policy and even humanity have required energetic and repulsive proceedings,—cruel, barbarous, and apparently unnecessary to the unobservant mind,—but proceedings which tended to prevent a more protracted struggle, and a consequently greater sacrifice of victims.

The only sort of excuse, for the horrors committed by the soldiery in Algeria, is their untamed passions, and the fire added to their natural ferocity, by the atrocious cruelties so often committed by the Arabs upon their comrades in arms, who have been so unhappy as to fall into their power. A thirst for revenge is a passion natural to the human breast, and one of the most difficult to assuage. As the French-

African soldier rushes on to overwhelm a tribe, he thinks of the many of his comrades who have been roasted alive before blazing Arab fires,— of others who have been mutilated and tortured in the most horrible manner, and their mangled bodies defiled with insults even after death; he thinks of his own sufferings during the expedition,— of his own fate if the chances of war are against him; and every drop of Arab blood is a salve to his feelings. As he bayonets an infant, he regards it as the mere crushing of a devil's brood; nor, unhappily, are such feelings, betrayed by deeds of equal atrocity, unparalleled amongst the soldiery of other European nations, in their combats with those whom they regard as barbarians.

The peculiar character of the inhabitants of North Africa is to be taken into consideration. They are fanatic, treacherous, crafty, and superlatively cruel. If allowed to escape with impunity after an aggression, they revile as fools those who granted them the boon, and anxiously await an opportunity to return it by treachery. If France is determined to subdue North Africa, force alone will bow the head of the Moslem; fear alone will give her any weight in the eyes of the Arab. Cold-blooded cruelties, and vile abuse of victories, every civilised mind will

regard with indignation ; and the superior officers of the French army in Africa would, many of them, do well to exert themselves more strenuously to restrain the too frequent ferocity of their soldiers, (especially of those regiments the ranks of which are partly filled by "indigènes",) lest these ill-regulated troops throw a slur upon the name of the French army, adding to the deep dye of that stain which already has tarnished their arms, and which it is far more desirable to endeavour to efface as far as possible than to increase. I mean that stain for cruelties practised by them during the Peninsular war, the remembrance of which rankles at this day, even within the breasts of those miserable sycophants of Spain, who have been accused of bargaining away the interests of their queen and country for French dross. The slaughter by wholesale of defenceless women and children, however difficult to restrain and ill-regulated the *troops* may be, yet crowns the *commanding officer* with dishonour.

Alas, that war should be indeed an evil necessarily attendant upon human nature! that the march of worldly affairs should call upon man to rob his fellow-man of that short and fleeting existence bestowed upon him by Heaven for the enjoyment of this terrestrial garden! It was

grievous to meditate upon the retired villages of the Beni-Abbés, transformed to smoking ruins; the noble towers blown into fragments; the golden crops burnt to black ashes, and the wide-spreading olives destroyed, beneath the venerable branches of which the patriarchal chiefs and elders of the tribe, at sunset, gathered in a circle, sat in grave council on the affairs of the little republic,—or beneath the foliage of which the maidens of the tribe sported, seeking shelter from the mid-day sun, ignorant and careless of the wide ambitious world beyond their own native mountains. It was grievous to think how a few short hours had transformed one of the most retired seats of tranquillity and native industry into a hell of devastation and misery. Mirth hailed the glorious sun as he rose to run his daily course: as he sank to his golden couch, the voice of lamentation and bitter mourning rose on high: the moon threw her cold beams on desolation.

"Strange—that where Nature lov'd to trace,
As if for gods, a dwelling place,
And every charm and grace hath mix'd
Within the paradise she fix'd,
There man, enamoured of distress,
Should mar it into wilderness."

CHAP. VIII.

BIVOUACK — NOCTURNAL SALUTE. — A WILD SOW CHARGES THE CAVALRY. — A FISHING PARTY DISAGREEABLY DISTURBED. — AN UNHAPPY *BOURGEOIS*. — PASSAGE OF A DEFILE. — SUDDEN ATTACK. — MASSACRE OF REAPERS.

DURING the day succeeding the attack upon the Beni-Abbés we remained at the same bivouack at the foot of their hills. The heat being very great, we adopted the plan of placing thick boughs of evergreens around our canvass habitations, extending the wings of the tents over them so as to obtain shade and a thorough draught at the same time. Others built gourbies of the fresh-leaved branches; so that the camp presented a picturesque appearance enough; and, what with fishing, shooting, bathing, and reclining at our ease beneath these rustic bowers, the day passed swiftly and pleasantly for all, except such as were writhing beneath the pain of honourable but smarting souvenirs, awarded them by the Beni-Abbés, or those afflicted with sickness, brought on by fatigue and heat. Amongst the latter, unfortunately, ranked my

friend and boon companion, the Count de Wys, who lost his hat during the affair of the day before, and the rays of the sun, beating unmercifully upon his bare head, sent him back to the camp with a severe attack of fever.

About ten o'clock this evening a loud explosion, and the whistle of two or three bullets, one of which struck a saddle on the ground near our dormitory, made us prick up our ears, announcing to us the neighbourhood of a Kabyle blunderbuss. All was then still until about midnight, when another report rang through the camp, and a soldier of one of the outposts at hand received a charge of slugs, which riddled his face and shoulder. Such was the only disturbance of our repose that night, though the mountain-fires of the Beni-Yala blazed furiously, as if in defiance, and many in the camp desired no better amusement for the ensuing day than a razzia upon some of their fine villages, which, more fortunate than their neighbours vis-à-vis, had escaped unscathed the day before.

Before daylight again appeared, I had already started from my sheep-skin couch, seized my gun, and, animated with the determination of a triumphant return to the camp laden with game for breakfast, sallied forth, when the trumpets sounded the "*réveil*," and hardly had I entered

the neighbouring brushwood when again the ill-natured clarion called "to saddle." Hurrying back, I found the column in motion; and my zeal for sporting lost me the usual morning's "*demi-tasse*." It was not more than eight a. m., when, having marched only about two leagues and a half, we were again preparing for a bivouack upon a little plateau of broken ground covered with masses of thicket. During this short march we traversed a considerable tract of brushwood, intersected with boar-paths in every direction. Through this, Colonel Richepanse led us at full trot, much to the damage of our legs and at risk of rolling horse and rider over the time-eaten stumps, or into the numerous blind holes concealed by rank vegetation. One bold dragoon preceding me suddenly diving into one of these pitfalls, as I galloped by nothing of him was to be seen above the nettles but his rueful countenance bristling with moustache and beard. "*Ah! mon cher*," cried I, "*aucun chemin de fleurs ne conduit à la gloire! Adieu! jusqu'au revoir!*"

We passed several Kabaïles by the way, reaping their corn; some few were shy, flying at our approach into the brushwood at hand; but others, crouching upon the ground, gravely watched the passage of the flight of human

locusts trampling down their crops. It is to be hoped their confidence was not ill-requited; but they would have been wiser if they had retired; for the stragglers of the arrière-garde were apt, at times, to appropriate burnooses and purses, giving perhaps, by way of payment, a sly thrust of the bayonet.

From a height covered with jutting rocks and brushwood, and having upon its north-western slope the white-domed tomb of a certain deceased marabbutt, some fifty scattered shots were fired upon the arrière-garde. It was not far from hence that we bivouacked; indeed it was probably the cause of our so soon terminating this day's march.

My friend De Wys with difficulty kept his saddle to reach the camp, then rolling off with a raving fever. We built a gourbie of evergreens over him, bathed his head, and otherwise doctored him. Two Kabaïles, found concealed amongst the brushwood at this spot, were seized, but, it is to be presumed, afterwards released, as the Marshal was anxious to conciliate the feelings of those whose territory we passed through, though of course ever ready to punish any direct attack or signs of treachery. We heard many shots fired amongst the heights at hand this day, as if for signals, and fires also

illuminated the mountains at night: yet were the hours of darkness passed in perfect tranquillity, and the following morning the march was again resumed at an early hour.

A wild sow, breaking cover by the way with seven or eight young ones in her train, afforded us an animated chase; but, in spite of some dozen carbine and pistol bullets sent after her, she presently charged through the squadron, throwing it into confusion, and disappeared in a large thicket, from whence we could not again force her.

After marching about three leagues we encamped upon an open space in the centre of the valley, with a rocky rivulet of sweet water to the north-west of the camp, and the Oued-Mansour to the south-east, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile. Vast tracts of corn grew around us, with a few wild olive-trees scattered here and there. Having arrived early at the bivouack, I sallied forth with three of the dragoons in search of game, hoping to fall in with some wild boars taking their mid-day siesta amongst the tamarisks and willows on the river bank. After wandering much farther from the camp than prudence admitted, we arrived at the edge of a grove with a tributary to the neighbouring river skirting it. Tempted by some fine fish

basking in the shallow water, in we waded, and busily engaged ourselves in making dams to entrap them; when suddenly one of us, looking up, beheld a gaunt Kabyle with his long gun, close upon us. Our ugly visitor was apparently as much taken by surprise as ourselves, and starting back, hesitated for a moment, then, making signals, was quickly joined by five comrades, all armed like himself. His hesitation had, however, given us time to leap from the water and regain our guns, which lay on the ground upon the banks of the stream; then, taking a lesson from the natives, and seeking shelter each behind his tree, we hailed our awkward customers, whom, as they were gradually approaching, and handling their arms in a suspicious manner, we bade stand, or be ready for a volley. Communing together an instant, one cried out that "they sought the Christian camp, as they wished to see the great shiekh of the Christians." The direction being indicated (but the *ruse* not drawing us from our favourable position), they made away as if for the camp; but suddenly, when at some distance, we perceived them turn sharp round into the grove again, as if purposing to outflank us. Stealing away therefore, as soon as they were concealed by the cover, we crossed the river,

gained the open country, and were far out of shot before they were aware of the movement. Looking back we perceived them on the very spot where they had so unexpectedly come upon us at first; they having evidently thought that we should resume our fishing after their departure, and thus give them an opportunity of creeping upon us by favour of the covert. We arrived at the camp, feeling our necks to make sure of the safety of our heads; and our gallant Captain Barthélemi upbraided me, and with justice, for playing with the lives of his men as well as with my own. During our above colloquy with these Kabaïles two cavaliers approached; but, to our great relief, as the odds began to look rather unfavourable, they pricked their steeds with their long spurs, and dashed off at full gallop, as if determined to have nothing to say to either party.

Some chiefs of the neighbouring tribes presented themselves at the camp, both this day and the preceding; for the disasters which had befallen the Beni-Abbés served somewhat to allay their intentions of resistance. The Kabyle indeed, depending so entirely on the soil for his existence, feels heavily the devastation of his crops by a victorious army. An invasion, especially during this season, must induce chiefs

of common prudence to offer submission, however false it may be, unless they feel confident of superiority in arms; the wheat, barley, beans, flax, &c., being all in a state of maturity, and thus exposed to fire or sickle; and when that is destroyed how are they to exist the ensuing winter? for it is against the tenets of their creed to store up more than is actually necessary for consumption until the harvest of the ensuing year, — they considering that such forethought indicates a distrust in Providence.

An adventurous "bourgeois," following on foot this expedition into the Kabylie en amateur, a day before our arrival here, had altogether lost his muleteer, together with his baggage-mule. His muleteer being a Kabyle, strong suspicions were entertained that he might have hung back and stolen away to his tribe, which lay off the line of march amongst the mountains. Now it happened that a shiekh of that very tribe appeared at the camp, and upon him hands were laid, with the understanding that his liberty should be restored to him, when the absent mule and effects were returned to the unhappy bourgeois. The chief dispatched two cavaliers in chase immediately; and, fortunately for both parties, they followed so staunchly upon the traces of the fugitive, that they came

upon him just as he gained his tribe, seized him, and brought him back to the camp, together with the mule and its burthen, all excepting the tent, which, to expedite his flight, the robber had cast aside. The joy of the owner may be conceived, for what with having been before robbed of many articles by the soldiery,—what with being sorely fatigued and foot-sore, he was in no state to sustain this wholesale manner of disposing not only of his other effects but of his mule, the cost of which is no trifle in Algiers. It is difficult, especially when there are rumours afloat of an approaching expedition, to obtain a mule, capable of bearing the fatigue of an expedition, for less than five or six hundred francs; some even command a thousand francs.

The Oued-Mansour now, as we approached Bougie, begins to take the name of *Bou-Massaoud*, being so called from the great and fierce tribe of "Beni-Bou-Massaoud," who drink of the waters of this river, dwelling upon its eastern banks at its embouchure into the Gulf of Bougie. Not far from our present bivouack (and just at the confluence of a considerable tributary flowing into this river from the mountains on the East held by the "Beni-Aïdel," the "Beni-Ourtilan," the "Beni-Ibrahim," and other tribes,) was said to be a very considerable city, called Tak-

bout; but we did not obtain sight of it. Also, amongst the mountains in the neighbourhood, is a college of tholbas, or learned men, of great note in the surrounding country.

Still following the course of the Oued-Mansour, or Bou-Massaoud, we the next day entered, after a few hours' march, a celebrated pass or defile, where the valley we had so long been traversing becomes exceedingly straitened; the heights closing in both upon the western and eastern shores of the river, so as to leave at their base little more than space for its course. Indeed in winter, when its waters are overflowed, it is very apparent that the entire passage must be wholly occupied by the river. The column pursued its march over beds of sand, rubble, and water-worn rocks, concealed in winter by the rushing torrent. It was for the infantry and convoi extremely fatiguing; for so winding was the course of this river that it was necessary continually to ford it, and sometimes to march in its waters a considerable distance. Though it flows in so narrow a space, yet eighteen times did the column ford it in a few hours, the water often reaching above the saddle-girths, and the current being in places very strong. Thus had the poor foot-soldier, the perspiration streaming from his weather-beaten face, continu-

ally to plunge into the cold water and to contend with the current, laden with his weighty accoutrements, a hot sun beating fiercely upon his head; then to drag himself dripping-wet over beds of heaving sand, or rolling stones, again to plunge into water above his middle. Attacks of "coup de soleil," or fever, were not then surprising. One man became a confirmed idiot, and so remained, until, upon the return of the column, he one day wandered from the rear-guard, and of course was seen no more.

The fatigues of this expedition were, however, a mere nothing. Indeed our marches were, as it may be remarked, always very short, and the season the most favourable for an expedition. To judge of the sufferings of the French army in Africa it is necessary to join an expedition during the winter-rains, or the great heats of summer, when it is no uncommon thing to behold man after man throw himself upon the earth, from which neither entreaties, threats, nor the certainty of his miserable fate if left there, will raise him; whilst others, seized with fearful accesses of madness, blow their own brains out with their muskets. Then, during the chill and heavy rains and cutting night-air, many a poor wretch has been found in the morning a cold and stiffened corpse. Again, during the great

heats at mid-day stifling exhalations rise from the earth; so that at a halt the wearied soldiers, having cast themselves down with their faces in close contact with the earth, have been discovered, upon the trumpets sounding the march, to be in a perfect state of asphyxy. A trumpeter, formerly in the Spahis of Oran, told me that he once saw above fifty together in that state; and that, during the same expedition, several destroyed themselves from desperation brought on by fatigue. To prevent the danger of asphyxy, the troops during a halt are now often forbidden to sit down, or, if not, only allowed to seat themselves upon baggage or other raised seats, so that they may not inhale the heavy murderous atmosphere floating upon the ground.

Marshal Bugeaud has always paid the utmost regard to the welfare of his troops during expeditions, never resorting to forced marches, or otherwise over-fatiguing them, unless under cases of great emergency. Moreover, a column under his command seldom has to complain of a dearth of provisions, his arrangements to guard against that being taken with great care. It is under the brave and fiery Youssouf, who falls like a thunderbolt upon flying tribes (when they have imagined him days and days in the rear), who

outvies the Arab in the swiftness and craft of his movements, and who is regarded by the enemy, when on their track, with as much terror as the robber regards a staunch bloodhound, — it is under that renowned general that the troops have often suffered harass, fatigue, and privation, trying their moral courage and their bodily strength to the utmost extent.

The heights upon either side of the defile we were now passing through were merely an inferior range of hills jutting forth from the base of lofty mountains in the back-ground, and in most parts, presented steep slopes covered with olive-trees and cultivated with wheat, whilst here and there towards their summits might be seen the dashkrahs of the mountaineers almost concealed amongst the thick foliage. Such was the general character of the defile; yet in some places inferior precipices flanked us, and the slopes, too steep for cultivation, were beautifully clothed with wild trees and brushwood, broken by mountain-ravines, down which came dashing torrents, overhung by tangled and thick covert. The scenery combined the wild, the beautiful, and the pleasing. The hand of man had rendered some parts a delightful garden; in others, nature revelled in all the wildness of her beauty.

At one spot, there being a sudden turn in

the defile, it appeared to be entirely blocked up by a lofty and steep eminence, from the slopes of which, with a few pieces of cannon, the whole defile to its south-western entrance might be well commanded. A few hundred determined defenders, in many other parts, might have defied and made sad havoc amongst us, with but little danger to their own safety; for, from the thick covert, and from behind massy fragments of rock, they could well have poured down upon us many a deadly volley. Indeed, if the tribes had combined to defend this mountain-pass, our passage would have been forced with great loss of life and infinite difficulty.

As onwards we plodded, groups of Kabaïles, armed and cursing us, sat above upon the slopes; yet not a shot was fired, until presently the arrière-garde, winding round the base of a lofty sand-rock with a precipitous face jutting forth towards the passage, received a sudden volley of from eighty to a hundred guns from a number of Kabaïles upon the summit. Had the assailants been less hasty the cavalry bringing up the rear would have received their fire, which, as it was, fell chiefly amongst the cattle and convoi, one horseman only being mortally wounded. He, having pushed forward rather a-head of the detachment, which was delayed in fording the river by

a confusion amongst the cattle, received a bullet which, entering his body just below the heart, traversed it in a downward direction, passing out at the right side. Falling from his saddle into the water the poor fellow struggled to the shore, and rising upon his feet approached the lieutenant in command of the cavalry, exclaiming that he had received the ball and was a dead man. His eyes never again beheld the glorious setting sun tint the fertile plains of "la belle France!" The extreme suddenness of this attack created a momentary hesitation:—then was the word given "Right about face, infantry!" Skirmishers thrown out mounted with expedition the steep slopes: but it was too late for anything but long shots; for as soon as the gang of Kabaïles had thus rudely saluted us, they fled from their position. Shots rang sharp and quick,—an animated chase, but to little avail, for the crafty foe had scattered, and were gliding on singly and swiftly up the brushwood-clad slopes, stooping close to the earth, and taking advantage of every little protection offered. Now the rattling of muskets reaching the ears of those in advance, they were led to suppose that the arrière-garde was seriously engaged; their fierce blood was aroused, and, no other foe presenting themselves, they fell upon nume-

rous Kabaïles peaceably reaping amongst the corn-lands at hand. These unarmed victims, some mere boys, were massacred without mercy. One trooper alone, I was by several mouths assured, sabred seven,—as *glorious* an action as sabring so many sheep. A few individuals who had been following the column merely from curiosity, and had held friendly converse with several of the soldiers, were also fallen upon and slain. One of these victims endeavouring to escape fled into the river, with the intention of crossing it; but a ball from a carbine shot him down in the middle of the water. Rising again he staggered mortally wounded to the opposite shore, and sat himself down on the stones. A trooper galloping furiously in chase rolled horse and all headlong into the river; but, recovering his footing, gained the side of the dying Kabyle, and dashed his brains out.

The dead were stripped of their burnooses, and searched for concealed money. Report said that in the felt cap of one nearly 300 francs were found,—an exaggeration perhaps; but a considerable sum of money did fall to the lot of one soldier; and bloody burnooses were cheap again.

It was a fierce vengeance that fell upon those *apparently* inoffensive for the brigand-like attack

made by a band of their brethren. I say upon those *apparently* inoffensive, because the wily Kabyle often conceals his arms at hand in the brushwood, and, taking up his reaping-hook, or entering into conversation with the passing enemy, appears the very type of innocence and simplicity: but as soon as the rear-guard passes on he hastily resumes his weapons; and if no decided attack is made in union with his brothers in arms, why he will at all events yield himself the satisfaction to throw in, from behind the brushwood or rocks, a few parting bullets, laughing in his sleeve at those who, their "eyes blinded by Allah," did not take advantage of his presence and affability to cut off his head. And then again he smiles, as, rushing out upon the foot-sore and weary straggler from the column, he passes his hideous knife along his victim's throat, and with a solemn measured step regains his gourbie, joyful at heart; for has he not assuredly gained an extra houri in Paradise by slaying another "Roumi dog?"

This attack was said to be wholly unexpected. Why unexpected? Because the chief of the tribe had been down to the camp, and had promised submission. This might be some safeguard against a general attack from his tribe perhaps; but such isolated attacks could not be very un-

expected, especially when traversing a portion of country so remarkably favourable for such exploits, and garrisoned by tribes so treacherous, warlike, and noted for their hatred to the invader; and it is well known that the Kabyle chiefs, or amims, as they are termed, have but little authority,—the form of government being purely democratic, and the amims, as has before been noticed, holding their authority, not by right of blood, as amongst the Arabs of the plain, but by election, and being continually changed. It may be supposed there were many averse to join in the promised submission rendered by their chief, though prudence might lead the bulk of the tribe to side with him. Those not of the same sentiments, holding him in little fear, were determined at all events not to let the enemy pass without a shot; and when such little incidents as the last-mentioned took place, the chiefs could only gloss them over by saying they were caused by the discontented and robbers of his tribe, over whom he possessed little power; and the Marshal's whole view (not forgetting the very peculiar position he stood in with the ministry with regard to this expedition) being only to get to Bougie,— receiving as many nominal submissions, and expending as little French blood and powder as possible, — such

affronts were lightly passed over, though under any other circumstances they would probably have begotten a bloody razzia upon the tribe to whom the offenders belonged, unless, at all events, they were delivered into his hands within a given period.

It was a matter of general surprise, that during the passage of this defile troops were not thrown out to occupy the inferior heights, and to dislodge from the brushwood-clad slopes any ambuscades which were so likely to lie there, and which might so seriously have annoyed the column. Many deemed it a remarkable instance of misplaced confidence, or want of forethought, to neglect such precautionary measures; though an old soldier like the Marshal, and one who has so often tasted of Arab treachery, was not likely to be guilty of one or the other of these errors. That we escaped without any more serious attack, was indeed a source of congratulation.

CHAP. IX.

PECULIAR WHEAT. — CHASE OF RED PARTRIDGES. — FORAGING PARTY. — A CAPTIVE JACKASS. — ARRIVAL OF GENERAL BEDEAU. — ATTACK OF THE *REBOULAS*. — BOUGIE. — ITS CAPTURE BY THE FRENCH.

AFTER passing the defiles, and again gaining the open valley, we proceeded about a league, and then encamped upon a flat, sloping down to the Oued-Bou-Messaoud, now flowing on our left. The "Beni-Ismael," the "Beni-Ourlis," the "Beni-Edris," and the "Beni-Ouglis," possess the mountains upon the opposite shore overlooking the valley from the West. The latter tribe hold an arba, or market, nigh at hand, which is frequented by all the neighbouring tribes. Upon the heights to the East and South-east lay several villages almost hidden amidst olive-groves. The slopes, as well as the valley, cultivated with corn, flax, and beans, spoke of the industry of the inhabitants.

All the wheat we met with throughout this expedition was bearded, the beards being remarkably long, and either blackened throughout, or with blackened tips, and this evidently not from

disease but by nature, the grain being full and large, and the husks white. Many stalks grow up from the same root, and I have heard it stated that one stalk will sometimes produce two heads, but never met with an instance of this. The finest wheat in Algeria comes from the neighbourhood of Medeah, about two days' journey South of Algiers; it is called Murwāny wheat. I never saw one head of wheat in the Kabylie with the smut-disease, so prevalent in Europe. Oats are very rarely cultivated by the inhabitants of this country; indeed I never saw but one instance, and that was during this expedition, and about this time, when one day we passed through a field of barley mingled with oats. The latter are too heating to be given to cattle in this country; barley and chopped straw taking their place.

The space we encamped upon to-day was covered with low clumps of bushes, where hares and partridges were so numerous that many were knocked down with sticks, or caught with the hand. Chasing the red partridge on horseback is exciting sport, though not to be indulged in much on an expedition, if one has any regard for his life or his steed; the former often depending on the vigour and freshness of the latter. Nevertheless the Arab cavaliers attached to the column

could seldom restrain themselves when a partridge rose; but giving the horses their long iron spurs, away they would dash with shouts and cries, following the flight of the bird until it dropped for rest, hiding itself in some tuft of grass or bushes. Then would the hunters gather in around the point from all sides, stretching forward from their saddles with their long guns pointed towards the spot, ready to fire at the first movement; but if the bird rose again suddenly another chase would ensue, until, terrified with the wild cries and swiftness of the pursuers, it would at last refuse to rise from the ground, and sticking its head into the grass, or into a hole, it was knocked on the head, and its throat cut immediately, to let out the defiling blood.

It has been asserted to me, both by Moslem and Christian, that the red partridge, during the great heats, may be often found in coveys, reposing upon the branches of the olive-trees, and that they may then be knocked down one after the other without difficulty, as they will not fly off. I never saw an instance of this; but from the number of persons who have told me so, I am led to believe it may be true. The hares of this country (unlike English hares, which when roused from their seats are over hill and far away so quickly,) upon being roused, dodge like rabbits

from bush to bush, and so may easily be surrounded and shot. They almost resemble the wild rabbit in colour, and are not much larger.

The night at this bivouack passed in perfect tranquillity, not a shot being fired on the outposts, nor any robbers appearing in the camp. The march was resumed the following morning about 4 a. m. We observed by the way several weirs for fishing, constructed by the Kabaïles across the river, and met one man with a number of a remarkably fine species of barbel he had taken. About 9 a. m. might be observed, about half a mile on our right, some extensive remains of what was once a Roman post; and about half an hour later we halted near another, also of considerable extent. These ancient remains indicated our approach to Bougie, the *Saldæ* of the Romans, who there held a large garrison, it being a place of importance on account of its noble bay.

The heat at our halting-place was intense, and our squadron fully exposed to it; the "pied à terre" being sounded just after we had traversed a delightful grove of aspen-trees, beneath the shade of which the infantry revelled, while we were condemned to stand in a broiling sun upon a space covered with stones so heated by the sun that to touch them with the hands was not wise. One of the men received a coup de soleil here.

Now, the chiefs of our neighbours in the mountains on the left not having come down to make submission, orders were given to sally forth, and reap for forage some fine pieces of wheat, at a short distance from this the "grande halte." As we approached the corn, we came suddenly upon three or four Kabaïles and a jackass in a little hollow. The men fled, and by reason of the very rough nature of the ground escaped two or three troopers who were sent in chase, and concealed themselves in some brushwood at hand; but the jackass was taken prisoner, though not without a gallant struggle on his part; for he was a very orthodox jackass, — a most determined Christian-hater, slashing out with his legs at the approaching infidels. Arrived at the corn-land, two or three troopers being posted on the high ground, to guard against any unforeseen attack, every man was soon at work with sickle and sack, and in half an hour not a head of corn was left standing at the spot. A Kabyle cavalier appeared in the neighbourhood, and after a lively chase was captured. So, well loaded with forage, and with a man and a jackass prisoners, we returned in triumph to the halt; the former prisoner showing by the way much more stoicism under misfortune than the latter, who, in spite of a heavy trooper on his back, and sundry pricks

of a sabre in his rear, still made all the resistance possible, unseating his rider more than once and causing much mirth.

The Kabyle was released shortly afterwards, and departed from the camp as little moved in deportment as when he first found himself prisoner. As for the fanatic jackass, he was sold by the captor to a comrade for ten francs.

Again resuming the march, we arrived within an hour at a delightful spot overshadowed by numerous olive-trees, and there bivouacked in the midst of wheat so strong and lofty that little but our horse's heads could be seen above it; but, as each one planted his tent, and busy sickles cleared a space around, the glorious crop soon disappeared. Nevertheless, if the Kabaïles during the night had been disposed to set the neighbouring tracts of corn on fire, we might have been sorely roasted; and if such a stratagem had been followed up by a vigorous attack during the confusion caused by the fire, they might perhaps have revenged, in some measure, the heavy punishment which had fallen on their neighbours the Beni-Abbés. But the presence of so large a force in the territory (for General Bedeau with a column of near seven thousand men was known to be close at hand) and the knowledge that a fearful vengeance would be wreaked

upon them, their mountain-villages swept away, and the whole country devastated, kept them in check, even if such a scheme had entered their heads.

The wounded and sick must have suffered considerably from heat during the last two or three days; for though the marches were but short, and they were comfortably housed at the bivouacks in a moveable wooden hospital, yet during the march they were fully exposed to the heat of the sun and the sirocco winds which had lately prevailed. These invalids were transported in a kind of wooden arm-chairs, called cacolets, which are slung across the backs of mules; so that four may be carried by each mule, sitting face to face, two on each side; or, if the state of the patient will not allow him to sit up, the cacolet can be formed into a kind of couch, upon which he may recline full-length.

About 7 o'clock this evening news arrived that the column of General Bedeau, from Setif, was bivouacked about an hour in our rear, near the place where we had made the grande halte. Shortly afterwards the General and his staff, accompanied by a troop of horse, rode into our bivouack, to present himself to the Marshal. Then was there much embracing of old friends on either side, comrades in arms; the camp-tables

beneath the olive-trees were again replenished; and the cup refilled passed gaily round, the bright moon throwing her silvery light upon the wild and animated scene.

The distant roll of our guns, during the affair with the Beni-Abbés, had reached the ears of our lately-arrived friends, during the time that they themselves were engaged with the Reboulas, the attack of which tribe, led on by the chérif Muley-Mohamed, seemed to have been even more determined than that made upon us by the Beni-Abbés. Twelve men killed, and one officer and forty-six men wounded, were reported to have been the loss on the French side; but I was afterwards informed that two officers fell, and about a hundred men were wounded, many of whom died of their wounds, rendered fatal by the fatigue and heat: for their marches had been much longer and more harassing than ours, the mountain route from Setif being extremely wild and difficult. Which of these statements of the loss was nearest the truth I know not, as the official reports have never met my eye; and even upon the official reports not the slightest dependence is to be placed, — a fact very well known by all.

It was about 1 p. m. the next day, when we arrived at the borders of a fertile plain, upon the northern extremity of which lies the town of

Bougie, Bougia, or Boudjeiah, overlooking, from the rocky little eminences upon which it is scattered, the wide-spreading bay of the same name. The approach to the plain of Bougie from the interior is extremely pleasing; for the natural fertility of the country is very great; and groves of figs and apricot-trees, mingled with the orange and the bright-flowered pomegranate, may be seen to the right and to the left set in rich pasture-land. Most venerable ash-trees lined our route,—trees of immense girth, sending forth gigantic wide-spreading branches, many of which had been lopped off by pioneers sent out from Bougie to prepare a route for the approaching column. Joyously the troops marched onwards. Again the merry song rang on high. All hailed with pleasure the bright sea, and all looked forward with delight to a few days' rest, and the enjoyment of such luxuries as the town of Bougie might afford. Upon the south-western extremity of the plain, about half a league from the town, we encamped upon the slope of a hill, overlooking the verdant plain, with the glorious Mediterranean before us; the abrupt and lengthened ridge of Djebel Gouraya, 670 metres in height, upon the cloud-capped summit of which formerly stood the domed tomb of the fair Kabyle saint, Lella-gouraya, for many ages visited with veneration by the moun-

tain-tribes far and near, but now replaced by a French fort, commanding Bougie, on our left; and upon our right, the Oued-Messaoud, or Summam, which river here forms the eastern boundary of the plain,—its opposite shores covered with massive groves of olive-trees, and overlooked by wild mountains, clothed with wood, and held by the fierce Beni-Bou-Messaoud, who, with the "Mezaya," their no less warlike neighbours, have long kept the inhabitants of Bougie cooped up within their walls, rendering it as yet a mere military post, held by the French; though the fertility of the country around must sorely tempt the colonist. The river Bou-Messaoud is here deep, and of considerable width, with a muddy bed. In winter it is often overflowed by the mountain-torrents.

The distance of Bougie from Algiers by sea is about thirty-five leagues; and with regard to Constantine it lies about thirty leagues rather North-west, and about 20 leagues from Setif (*Setifis*), and 50 from Bone (*Hippone*), the ancient episcopacy of the venerable Saint Augustine. The extensive ruins upon which the modern town is founded, many of them of the highest antiquity, mingled with others of later date, prove that it has always been regarded as a place of great importance by successive Carthaginian, Roman, Vandal, Sara-

cenic, and Moslem rulers; and, from its very commanding position, its fine bay, and the fertility which reigns around it, it is indeed well calculated to become so again under the French dominion, when firmly established. A line of military posts throughout the whole extent of the valley we had just traversed, betwixt Bougie and Hamza, would soon beget a line of villages; for colonists, assured of protection, would not hesitate to flock to this, apparently the most fertile and most healthy portion of Algeria. The opening of a grand route might be effected with the greatest facility throughout the whole distance, so as to form a junction near Hamza with the route already opened from Algiers to Aumale, or Sour-Gouzelan: thus the wildest portion of the Kabylie, entirely hemmed in by military posts and routes, would soon be driven to enter into friendly relationship with the French occupants. It was by the opening of such routes, and the establishment of such chains of military posts, that Rome held her sway throughout the most mountainous regions of Numidia, as is very evident to the traveller, especially in the wild province of Constantine, where nearly every league he may halt to gaze upon the ruins of Roman military posts, overthrown by time; their massive blocks often intermingled with stone

coffins, proving that they were posts of no merely temporary occupation. It is probable, however, that some considerable period may elapse before this connexion, so desirable for the colony, may be opened betwixt Bougie and Algiers, by the present occupants of Algeria; the annual hundred millions of francs wrung from the French government, and the French African army of 120,000 men, being apparently insufficient to uphold and guard that portion of the country which is at present in a state of submission.

Before the occupation of Bougie, in 1833, by the French, it counted a population of several thousands. At present there are about 500 inhabitants, exclusive of a garrison of twelve hundred men. A description of this town, left us by Leo Africanus, shews how its glory has faded within the last three centuries: —

"The houses are of pleasing aspect enough; and there are temples, colleges where dwell the scholars, and doctors who give lectures upon the law and mathematics. There are numerous hospitals, convents for the religious of their creed, and caravansaries. The open places of the city are very handsome and much decorated; but one is not able to walk in the streets without continually ascending or descending. Upon the side of the mountain there may be remarked a little fortress

encircled with walls, and beautified throughout with mosaics, joinery, and azured arabesque work, so singular and wonderful that the cunning of the workmanship exceeds by far the price and value of the material. The inhabitants of this city were once opulent, and accustomed to arm numerous galleys, which they sent forth to make descents upon the coast of Spain. This in the end caused the ruin of themselves and their city; for it was on this account that Pierre de Navarre was sent against them. They live poorly, because their lands do not produce much corn, though they are wonderfully adapted for fruits. Around the city, and up to the gateway looking towards the East, there is an infinity of gardens producing fruit in abundance. Beyond, are numerous mountains, extremely rugged, but wholly covered with wood, amongst which are nourished countless apes and leopards. The citizens are jovially disposed, seeking only to pass their time pleasantly, and to lead a joyous life; so much so, indeed, that there is not one who does not play on musical instruments and dance; and especially the chiefs amongst them, who never make war against any for whatever motive; so that they are become so degenerate and cowardly, that being all alarmed at the descent of Pierre de Navarre, with his fourteen

vessels, they fled with their King, who was amongst the first to gain the heights, seeking refuge for himself and his people amongst the mountains. Thus, without one slain, or a blade broken, the Count, after having landed, sacked the town. He then speedily caused a fort to be constructed near the border of the sea upon a beautiful little plain, and moreover fortified another ancient fortress, which is likewise nigh the sea, and adjoining the marine arsenal, and was taken, as you have heard, by the Spaniards in the nine hundred and seventeenth year of the Hegira. Six years afterwards, Barbarossa, wishing to recover it from the hands of the Christians, came with a thousand Turks to besiege it, and battered the ancient fortress, which they took and fortified: then, with the assistance of the mountaineers from the neighbouring mountains, they thought to take the other fort upon the sea-shore; but, at the first onset, a hundred of the most daring and valiant Turks were killed, and four hundred of the mountaineers, which so astonished them that their fierce anger considerably subsided; so much so, indeed, that they would have no more of it, and Barbarossa retired forthwith to the castle of Gigel." *

* See "Etudes Africaines," by M. Poujoulat, citing "Recueil des Voyages de Jean Temporal," 1556. The

The French expedition against Bougie was fitted out at Toulon, and left that port the 22nd September, 1833; the fleet consisting of a frigate, numerous corvettes and brigs, and fifteen transports, with eighteen hundred men on board, under the command of General Trézel. The 29th they arrived before Bougie, and commenced battering it. The heavy fire from the ships soon silenced that of the enemy, and the French troops were landed. Now it was that the struggle really commenced; for stoutly was every foot of ground contested by the Moslems, concealed amongst the groves of fruit-trees. A most deadly and determined fire was kept up. Every garden was garrisoned with desperadoes, who held out to the last moment; then, retreating into the ravines which intersect this curiously positioned town, they fortified themselves in the holes and crannies of the rocks, defying approach during day; and sallying out during the darkness of night scattered themselves again amidst the covert, falling upon the foe on every side. Such was the struggle carried on in the purlieus of the town, whilst from the eminences upon which the town itself is scattered, a heavy fire was continually directed against the French; and the town once entered,

Spaniards were ultimately chased from Bougie, soon after the disastrous descent of Charles V. upon Algiers.

house after house was gallantly contested, and height after height; until at last, driven out fairly by superior strength, after seven days' desperate fighting, the Moslem occupants retired to the summit of Mount Gouraya, which wholly commanded the town, and from hence continually threatened and annoyed the invaders; but on the 12th of October this almost inaccessible position was gallantly attacked, and taken at the point of the bayonet by the French. Stimulated by the Bey of Constantine, a desperate attack was made upon the town and the block-houses erected in the neighbourhood. Some time afterwards, a report being spread that nearly the whole garrison was invalided, the tribes gathered together, resolving to make one more desperate struggle for possession of the town. Six thousand Kabaïles then marched upon Bougie during the night; their women and their children following in their rear, to take their part in the pillage and massacre; so certain were they of the success of the expedition. Within the town itself it was generally believed that the last moment of the French dominion there was at hand, and the civilians sought refuge in the ships in the port. The Kabyle sharp-shooters covered the heights of Gouraya, raining a continual shower of bullets upon every open space in the town below.

During this time the bulk of the Moslem force fell with fury upon an isolated blockhouse some distance from the town, and held only by twenty chasseurs and five artillery-men: yet did these brave fellows defend their little wooden fort and their lives with such gallantry that, after six hours' furious attack, the whole Kabyle force withdrew to wail over the serious loss they had suffered, relinquishing any further attempt upon the town at that time. Later and desperate attacks have been made upon Bougie and its outposts, but without any very serious results. The present aspect of the town is miserable enough: a large hospital and some rows of houses, ill-constructed, as are nearly all the French houses in Algeria, are its only ornament at present. Other houses, half-built, and mostly at a perfect standstill at this period from the general stagnation of affairs of the colony, give a kind of ruinous and desolate character to the town. As for the composition of the population exclusive of the garrison, it consists of one or two little peddling merchants and a few vagabond French, Maltese, and Mahonais, who gain a precarious living by holding ill-provided stalls, shops, and cafés, remarkable for nothing except their extreme dirtiness.

CHAP. X.

VARIOUS CHIEFS SWEAR FEALTY.—BAD DISCIPLINE.—BOUGIE SACKED BY FRIENDS.—OUTRAGEOUS ZOUAVES.—A DUEL.—DEPARTURE OF MARSHAL BUGEAUD.—"*ORDRE DE JOUR.*"—ADDRESS TO THE COLONISTS, ETC.

THE second day after our arrival at Bougie, numerous chiefs, cited to appear, presented themselves at the camp, where they were bedecked with red burnooses and arms of French manufacture, ornamented according to the rank and influence of the receivers; some of these arms were extremely handsomely decorated with silver work. To these wild sons of the mountains the venerable Marshal made a forcible harangue, telling them that extermination would be the reward of faithlessness on their part; and, amongst other desideratums, that he desired to see the country in such a state of serenity, that "a woman might pass alone from Bougie to Setif with a corbeille of silver upon her head." It was amusing enough to remark the expression of the grisly countenances around at the broaching of this remarkably peaceful idea, and a friend at

hand instinctively exclaimed, "Heaven forbid that it should be my wife!"

Upon the Marshal's further observing that he trusted the time would soon arrive when they would burn no more powder, a voice demanded whether the firing of guns at their marriage-feasts would be offensive to the Christian Sheikh; and being informed that they were at liberty to burn as much powder as they liked on such occasions, this votary of Hymen—who, en passant, was a most ill-conditioned looking fellow—pronounced the words of the Marshal, good. Then was a cannon fired to add effect to the ceremony; and shortly the chiefs mounted their ragged-looking horses, and, with their gay new burnooses thrown over their filthy old garments, they dashed across the plain to seek their mountain-homes, pleased enough without doubt at having so cheaply obtained their finely ornamented arms, and anxiously looking forward to the time when they might use them against the donors.

The position of our camp was commanding, but by no means agreeable: for, as has been stated, it was upon the slope of a hill, so that the tents could be but badly pitched; and little comfort was to be found beneath them when pitched, the whole slope having been ploughed up, presenting a surface covered with large stones and sun-baked

clods little less hard than the stones themselves, against which our sheep-skin couches afforded but slight protection. Again, there not being the slightest shade at hand, the heat was suffocating within the tents, and outside the rays of the sun were insupportable; therefore, as may be supposed, all who were at liberty mounted their horses, and galloping across the plain, spent the greatest portion of their time in Bougie. The military coup-d'œil from the upper portion of the camp was, however, magnificent. Around the base of the slope, and occupying a portion of the plain below, was bivouacked the column of General Bedeau, which had formed its junction with the Marshal's column upon the evening of the same day that we had arrived here. Thus did the eye embrace the clustering tents of about fifteen thousand fighting men, exclusive of many hundred Arab cavaliers and numerous camp-followers. From Bougie the appearance of the camp during the day, with the sun shining upon it, was that of a city of low white houses, every avenue of it glistening with arms; and at night the very heavens were illumined with the glare of thousands of camp-fires.

The interior of Bougie presented an extraordinary scene enough during our stay in her neighbourhood; her steep and usually desolate

streets being crowded with soldiers from the camp, the greatest portion of them mad with intoxication, others hawking about for sale the plunder they had gained upon the march, in order to invest the proceeds in liquor. The Zouaves especially conducted themselves in a most outrageous manner: all discipline was forgotten by them, and they may be said almost to have sacked the town. Not only did they violently attack and clean out the wine and liquor shop vi et armis, and commit other gross outrages, but sacrilegiously they broke into the French chapel and robbed it of the sacred plate. A body of Gendarmes sent in to quell these maddened rioters were said to have been seized by them and locked up as prisoners. The whole town was indeed in an uproar: men in an insensible state stretched upon the ground on every side, others furiously fighting amongst themselves. The road leading from the gate at the East of the town is flanked by a deep precipice. Two Zouaves quarrelling, one seized his adversary and settled the question in dispute by hurling him from the rock, at the base of which he was dashed to pieces. Two of the "Chasseurs d'Afrique" of our squadron also fell out, and fought with their sabres upon the plain. One was mortally wounded, his adversary making so desperate a lunge at him that the point of the

sabre, which I afterwards examined, was actually bent into a curve against his spine, it having passed through his chest. This man was to be regretted, for he was one of the finest soldiers in the squadron. The Chasseurs d'Afrique, taking them all in all, are in truth a very fine body of cavalry, and under good discipline.

The inhabitants of Bougie leading a dull time enough in general, they greeted the arrival of the army with pleasure, looking forward to an agreeable break of the monotonous tenour of their lives. They also depended upon the Marshal's inflicting condign punishment upon some of the neighbouring tribes, who often annoyed them; or, at all events, they trusted that he would leave some troops, to add to the strength of the garrison and otherwise protect them. Finding their fond hopes deceived, their little stronghold stormed by such riotous visitors, provisions so completely bought up that private families could scarcely by dint of money obtain sufficient supplies, they began to long for our absence as anxiously as they had looked forward to our arrival.

The "Caméléon" steamer of war lay in the port, destined to bear Marshal Bugeaud to Algiers on his way to France. Report said that the intentions of this venerable and gallant

soldier were to resign the reins of government, and quit for ever the shores of Africa. Others said he was recalled by his king for having so sturdily persisted in undertaking this expedition into the Kabylie in spite of the remonstrances of the ministry.

The 26th was the day assigned for his departure, and a large and brilliant cavalcade of officers accompanied their chief from the camp to the sea-shore. There halting, a circle was formed, and the Marshal, in a forcible and feeling speech, presented his adieus to the gallant band around him, expressing his regret at parting with them; his thanks to them for their honourable bearing beneath his command; his hopes for the prosperity of the colony under his successor; and his assurances that the welfare and future successes of that army which had so gloriously upheld him during his six years' occupation of the honourable post of Governor of Algeria, would ever be hailed by him with warm satisfaction and pride, &c. It was a noble and moving scene! The white-haired warrior, over whose head nigh fourscore years have passed, the greatest portion of these spent in camps and amid the perils and fatigues of war, sat firm and erect on his saddle as thus he addressed his officers in words well chosen, and in

a style concise and military. "Vive le Maréchal!" burst from the hearts of those around him; and shortly afterwards the Caméléon glided out of port for Algiers: the conduct of the column upon its homeward march being consigned to General Gentil.

Ten days after thus quitting the column at Bougie, Marshal Bugeaud sailed from Algiers for France, thus bidding a final adieu to Algeria. His exit from that city was glorious; the authorities, military and civil, together with all the inhabitants of the city, crowded forth to accompany him to the place of embarkation. The air rang with cries of "Vive le Maréchal!" and "Vive le Roi!" crowns of laurel strewed his path as he passed onward; the militia of the town and troops of the garrison being under arms, and drawn up on either side of the route. "*Certes, dans les temps antiques,*" exclaimed the admiring spectators, "*on eût couronné son glorieux front!*" Salutations and acclamations were mingled with repeated salvos of cannon. Such was the "*dernier adieu de la terre d'Afrique à son conquérant.*" Hopes were loudly expressed by all that he would be prevailed upon again to assume the reins of government, and fondly the eyes of the gazing multitude hung upon the frothy wake of the Caméléon, as gradually

she glided from their sight, thus depriving the *affectionate* population of Algiers of that man whom, during the six years of his abode amongst them as their governor, they had so repeatedly overwhelmed with abuse and unmitigated marks of discontent, because his ideas of colonisation and administration did not exactly coincide with their own. Especially of late had they vented their ire upon his head for venturing to propose his system of "*military* colonisation," his six years' experience having convinced him that such an avant-garde to *civil* colonisation is required, there being as yet no solid and sure foundation for the latter structure, unless based upon some such system as that which he so urgently pressed upon them.

In spite of his many adversaries, however, there are few who will venture to deny that the Marshal, Duc d'Isly, has done more for Algeria than any of his predecessors. His means have certainly been greater than any of those before him have enjoyed, a vast army and more generous funds having been allowed him to carry out his measures.

Neither will any deny that he is the first governor that has yielded to the colony the slightest feeling of security; for it is he that has driven back the hostile population from the

Metidja to the Atlas, from the Atlas to the confines of the Desert and Morocco. As for the army, he has gained their unlimited confidence by his evident superiority in military knowledge, and above all by the knowledge he has displayed of the peculiar tactics necessary to such a war as they are engaged in, and by the numerous reforms and improvements introduced by him for the lessening of their fatigues, dangers, and sufferings.

Neither can any accuse the Marshal of having ever spared himself from bodily or mental fatigue in his exertions for what he has considered the benefit of the colony, however unwise his views and systems may have appeared in the eyes of others.

Like the frogs in the fable, the population of the French possessions in Algeria eternally pray Jupiter for a change of governors, and are equally discontented with all. The colony is indeed in its present state as a house divided against itself: whilst the Marshal's opinions differ materially with those of La Moricière, the talented governor of Aran, it is also split into divers inferior factions, meetings after meetings being called together by the different heads to exclaim loudly against those of adverse opinions. The press teems with innumerable brochures,

each upholding its favourite system; whilst the editors of the newspapers enter the list and vituperate their brother-editors. One journal alone of any pretensions to ability is now, however, in existence in Algeria, and that has generally proved itself an upholder of the Marshal and his opinions throughout the numerous controversies.

Before his departure, the Marshal addressed the following "ordre de jour" to the army, which was received by a courier and read throughout the column during our march back to Algiers: —

"Officers, sub-officers, and soldiers of the army of Africa! —The state of my health, and divers other weighty considerations, oblige me to pray my king to appoint me a successor. His Majesty will not refuse me a repose become so indispensable. Awaiting his decision, I go to enjoy the leave of absence which has been granted to me for some time.

"How can I separate myself from you without feelings of profound regret? During six years and a half you have not ceased to honour me with a confidence which has added to my strength and to your own. It is this union between the chief and his troops which renders armies capable of performing illustrious deeds. Such have you performed. In less than three years you have crushed the Arabs of the Tell, and forced their chief to seek refuge within the empire of Morocco. Then did the Moroccans enter into the struggle: in three engagements and one pitch battle you have vanquished them! Abd-el-Kader having again re-entered Algeria at the end of 1845, and having excited to insur-

rection almost the whole country, again you overcame him. He sought assistance and resources in the Desert; but you, rendering yourselves as swift in your movements as the Arabs themselves, there fell upon him. In learning the art of subsisting in such remote countries, where the flying population leave no resource to the conqueror, you have been able to strike your enemies on every side, upon the plains of the Sahara, as well as amongst the most abrupt mountains of the Tell. You have left them neither refuge nor rest, and, behold! now you have established that moral influence which renders the routes safe, and protects the colonisation, without requiring your constant presence. Thus it is that you have been able to dispense with a multiplication of permanent posts, which would have immobilised a great portion of your forces, and disabled you from achieving the great work of conquest. The great Kabylie served as a place of refuge and hope for your adversaries; this was a continual danger suspended over your heads. The mere rumour of an expedition, however, has sufficed to induce the submission of the western part of the Djurjura, and by three combats you have overcome the fierce mountaineers dwelling in the centre, and who exulted never to have rendered submission to any. The eastern portion will no longer offer resistance. But that which yields you no less honour in the eyes of France and of the world, is to have comprehended from the first that you had a twofold task to accomplish; that to fight and to conquer was not alone sufficient, but that it was necessary to labour to utilise the conquest. Thus have you deemed it glorious at times to lay aside your arms for instruments of labour. You have opened nearly all the routes which exist; you have constructed bridges and a multitude of military edifices; you have formed villages and farms for the civilian colonists; you have cleared lands for those agriculturists as yet too weak to do it for themselves; you have farmed meadows, sown the fields, and harvested the crops. By this have you shown that you will merit to

partake of that soil which you have conquered, and that you know as well how to cultivate it as to guard it against your enemies. There are armies who may inscribe in their annals more memorable battles than yours; but there are none who have been engaged in so many combats, and at the same time have executed such extensive works.

"That which you have done, soldiers! you will well know again how to perform under another chief than me: your country and your king expect it of you, never will you be deaf to their voices.

"As for myself, within my retirement my thoughts will ever be with you: I will follow you during your painful marches, during your combats, during your labours, and always shall I be happy and proud in your successes."

To the colonists the Marshal also published an address, in which, after asserting that the financial and industrial crisis now so heavily afflicting the colony was attributable to neither military nor political causes, but rather to the thoughtless and mad spirit of speculation so wildly indulged in, and necessarily involving so many in ruin, he proceeds to accuse them of unreasonable impatience and discontent in the following words: —

"Your impatience, natural without doubt, but ill-advised, leads you continually, and with regard to all affairs, to outrun the march of time. You desire to behold everything accomplished at once; as if a country the image of France was to be raised in a few years upon a naked soil: it is a work of ages. This impatience often renders you unjust towards your administrators. You often blame your go-

vernors for that which is attributable to the difficulties they have to combat. These difficulties you rarely take into consideration; ordinarily, you regard only your own egoistical interests, and not the general welfare.

"The most eager and unreflecting amongst you, outstripping time, demand a complete assimilation with France, that is to say, all her civil and political institutions. This they demand without considering what you are, and the space you occupy in the country. You represent but the fortieth part of that population which is requisite to utilise the conquest, and to keep under the Arabs, who are forty times more numerous than yourselves; and at the same time the territory you occupy is barely the hundredth part of the surface conquered."

After going on to state that the great difficulties they have to contend with arise chiefly from the Arabs, the climate, and those miseries which always attend the first steps of agriculture in a new country, he recommends them to demand from the mother-country the maintenance of the army in its full force, — the adoption of a more extended system of colonisation, both civil and military, — and the augmentation of grants for public works of the first necessity. "*Enfin qu'elle ôte à la centralisation de Paris tout ce qui peut lui etre ôté sans compromettre la responsabilité ministérielle.*" "Then will the affairs of the colony be carried on with greater rapidity, and that slowness of their progress, which is the sole foundation you have for all

those bitter complaints which you pour forth every day, will no longer exist."

The impatience evinced by the good people of Algiers is perhaps ill-grounded, if we take into consideration that they pretend only to date the commencement of the great work of colonisation *four years* back, that is to say, at the latter end of 1842; until which period the progress of occupancy only extended to the sea-coast towns, and indulgence in agricultural pursuits was both perilous and highly unsatisfactory, the Arabs often taking the liberty of harvesting the heads of the labourers, or pretty certainly reaping that which the latter sowed. Nevertheless, long before that year, there were certainly essays at colonisation attempted round the city of Algiers, and even upon the Metidja; but they were blasted by the descent of the daring Emir in 1839, and 1842 arrived before the colonists again ventured to steal forth upon the plain, and, beneath the fostering care of the administration, little rickety wood and plaster villages commenced springing up. As the progress of civilisation is in its nature far slower than that of conquest, and it has taken sixteen years to bring Algeria into its present degree of subjection, it is contended that little can be expected from a mere *four* years' labour at the former task.

An extraordinary statement relative to the expedition into the Kabylie was published in a letter from Algiers to one of the Parisian journals, accusing the mal-appropriation, to defray the expenses of this expedition, of grants made for "public works;" no provision having been made for the above expedition. This statement was in the following words: —

"The expedition into the Kabylie is regarded at Algiers not only with displeasure, but even with indignation, which you will easily understand when you are made aware that this expedition is to the detriment of the working population. I will explain myself. It was necessary to provide a considerable sum of money to defray the expences of this military excursion, and as there was not a sous in the budget for any such undertaking, it was necessary to turn considerable funds from their destined course. Thus there has been deducted from funds destined —

	Frs.
Aux travaux du génie - - - -	600,000
Aux dessèchements et au service des ponts et chaussées - - - -	450,000
Sur ceux destinés au port d'Alger - -	250,000
Sur ceux destinés aux travaux urbains -	450,000
Total - -	1,750,000

"Thus there is a sum of nearly two millions which ought to have been devoted to public works of all kinds, and by consequence would have contributed to the well-being of the working class, which, by reason of this expedition, is turned off from an employ useful in a twofold sense to Algeria, and that at a time when the penury of funds is causing universal depression.

"How can one be astonished, after this, at the sad state of affairs in Algeria, in spite of the enormous sacrifices made by France! I avow to you that prayers are almost made that the Marshal may receive a check which will render his fall inevitable."

It is but just to observe, that this charge of misapplication of funds was flatly and indignantly denied to be correct by the principal journal of Algiers; but I have since been personally informed, and upon such high authority, that it was correct, that, however loth to believe it, one could hardly do otherwise.

CHAP. XI.

ADIEU TO BOUGIE. — "TREE KABAÏLES" DANGEROUS. — OAK OF SETIF. — OUTPOSTS ATTACKED. — FATAL ERROR. — PARTRIDGES AND JERBOAS. — PREVAILING WINDS.

It was about 3 o'clock on the morning of the 27th that our encampment at Bougie broke up, and the column, now under the command of General Gentil, commenced its march back again to Algiers; that led by General Bedeau following us some hours later in the rear. Towards the afternoon we bivouacked upon a space clothed with long and exceedingly coarse grass, diversified by clumps of lentisks, tamarisks, and other brushwood. This spot lay about a mile to the East of the Roman ruins, nigh which we encamped the day preceding our arrival at Bougie. Between us and these ruins flowed the river, upon the western borders of which, some two or three miles in the rear, the column of General Bedeau also encamped.

Wild boars and other game abounding here, the dogs following the column were gathered together, and though a hybrid pack enough, yet did they soon rouse a noble boar, and after an

animating chase we brought him to bay, slew him, and dragged his heavy carcase in triumph to the camp. Having, after this, killed several partridges and hares, I set out towards the evening to pay a visit to General Bedeau, and some officers attached to his column (whose acquaintance I had had the pleasure of making during a tour some months before in the province of Constantine), thinking that a little game might be an agreeable contribution to their mess; but after wandering amidst groves and brushwood until nearly dark without arriving at their bivouack, and fearing to lose myself, and fall into the hands of the Philistines, I held it but wise to beat a retreat to my own quarters. Whilst resting by the way beneath a large tree in the midst of a grove, a peculiar sound, resembling the click of the lock of a gun, attracted my attention, and diverted my meditations upon what I had deemed the solitude around me. Casting my eyes up, I perceived a Kabyle, who, having formed a kind of huge nest of brushwood upon the far end of the large branch of a tree at hand, was there seated with his long gun pointing towards myself in a most disagreeable manner:—another minute, and I should probably have had a bullet through me, and been numbered amongst the strayed and lost from the

camp. Fortunately my body was partly sheltered by the trunk of the tree I was leaning against, from the aim of the gentleman above me, and, his position being more exposed than convenient, upon perceiving me ready to forestall his shot, he dropped his gun on to his nest with a friendly exclamation. Bidding him rather an uncourtly adieu, I backed from his presence, and diving into the thick covert hastened towards the camp; though not without running a narrow risk of being shot by a sentinel of one of the outposts, who took me for a skulking Arab. What my friend in the tree had chosen so extraordinary a post for, I know not, unless he was in ambush for a panther or a boar, neither of which would have proved so welcome to him, probably, as a straggling Christian, could he have shot one down without danger to himself; a consideration always borne in mind by these uncouth natives, who, if they have a chance of assassinating a man, will never enter into open combat with him.

By a long and most fatiguing march from day-break until sunset of the following day, we reached the defiles in the mountains of the Beni-Ourli,—traversed them, and again encamped about two miles beyond them. It being re-

ported that one of the most ferocious tribes of the Kabylie, the Beni-Zouaoua, who dwell in the mountains behind the Beni-Ourlis, upon the north-eastern base of the Djurjura, had gathered together in arms their men of might, above 20,000 strong, it was deemed likely that they might have excited the neighbouring tribes to dispute this mountain-pass upon our return; especially as they were probably aware that Marshal Bugeaud (whose renown as a warrior is considerable throughout the country) no longer headed the column. Measures were accordingly taken to guard against any surprise, troops being thrown out on either flank, and ambuscades laid to fall upon the Kabaïles, in case of any hostile demonstration or attack upon the arrière-garde. Not the slightest interruption was, however, offered to our passage; not a Kabyle appeared, neither was a shot fired.

The column of General Bedeau, which, so far, had hung upon our rear to insure our safe passage of these defiles, or to co-operate, as necessity might require, now turned off in the direction of the town of Setif, in the mountains to the East. This French post, upon the site of the once flourishing and important Roman city Sitipha or Sitifis (which gave its name to the eastern portion of Mauritania Cæsariensis, when

that province was divided into two distinct regions, about the time of Diocletian), lies some thirty leagues West-south-west of Constantine, and is possessed of advantages likely to restore its ancient importance, if the French dominion endure. Situated in a commanding position, and environed by extensive and fertile plains, excellently adapted for the breeding of cattle, and most especially of horses (for which its neighbourhood has ever been renowned), it is already named the *chef-lieu* of one of the French military sub-divisions of the Province of Constantine. Numerous sources of sweet water are to be found within the town itself, and the "Oued-bou-Sellam," which has its fountain at a short distance from it, irrigates, together with other streams, the neighbouring plains. The Arab geographer, Edresi, in speaking of the fertility of this spot, says, "Water is abundant; the soil is shaded by different species of fruit-trees, and walnuts are gathered there in such abundance that the inhabitants even export them to far countries." The only tree, however, for many leagues around Setif, when the French arrived there, was one venerable oak, which for century after century has defied time and tempest, and even may have flourished before the glory of ancient Setif was extinguished. It is

known throughout the country as "The Tree of Setif," and many a mysterious legend is attached to it by the superstitious mountaineers, who regard it with great veneration, and often gather together beneath its gnarled branches, listening eagerly to the wild traditions related by their elders. By the latter end of last year, however (1846), two hundred thousand trees had been planted by the French in the environs of Setif, so that the glory of this ancient giant of the forest is likely, in the course of time, to be eclipsed.

Traces of Roman routes*, rare fragments of ancient inscriptions, and a few mouldering walls, alone remain to indicate the passed splendour of the once proud Sitifis. As one stands beneath the noble "oak of Setif," well may he exclaim, "How perishable are the works of man! how durable those of Nature!" The page of history alone records the existence of that people who

* By the division of Mauritania Cæsariensis, all that which lay to the west of Saldæ (Bougie) as far as the river Malva (Mul-looiah) retained the name of *Cæsariensis*, whilst from Saldæ to the Ampsaga (the Rummel of the moderns) was entitled *Mauritania Sitifensis*. Setif itself was one of the great centres of Roman commerce, and the point of intersection of those great routes affording communication between Carthage, Lambesa, Cirta, Cæsarea, Saldæ, Igigeli (the Jigel or Djidgeli of the moderns), and other points.

laid in pride the foundations of the fair city formerly overshadowed by the branches of this tree. The Vandal monarch who once held within his extended sway these very mountains, and who, bowed down by adversity, was driven at last by the Roman legions to seek refuge amongst them, a starving fugitive, burst forth into an ungovernable fit of laughter, as, led prisoner by Belisarius, he meditated upon the uncertainty of human power, the wild freaks of destiny. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" he incessantly exclaimed, as, captive behind the car of the victorious Thracian, and gracing his triumph, he was forced to prostrate himself before the Emperor Justinian, seated proudly on his gorgeous throne within the Hippodrome of Constantinople.

Hardly had the sun set upon our present encampment when blazing signals burst forth upon the surrounding mountains, and a sharp fire was opened upon the outposts to the North-west of the camp. Many of the bullets fell into the bivouack, but with little effect; for, being fired from a considerable distance, their force was spent before arriving there. Then was there dead silence for a time; for the Kabaïles found their attack upon the outposts of little avail, and, driven back, retired into the coverts to take counsel together. They appeared, however, to

be in no great force, for after this first onset they contented themselves with creeping on individually, or in small parties, as near to the outposts as safety would allow, and firing from the thicket at intervals during a great portion of the night. This treacherous mode of attack is fatiguing and dangerous to the soldier, who, ever obliged to be on the *qui vive*, is liable any moment to be shot down by an invisible enemy, whose fire, if not fatal, can only be returned wildly, the flash of his piece alone indicating his position; whereas his assailant's aim has been taken coolly and steadily, as, crouched in his lair, he watched his opportunity. Ambuscades being laid, a few of these disturbers of our repose were cut off and slain in their endeavours to creep down upon the outposts; yet, in comparison to the great number of shots fired, the execution done on either side was trifling.

The following day we remained still at the same bivouack. During the course of the past night heavy firing was heard in the direction of General Bedeau's march, leading us to suppose that he was again attacked. Our nocturnal aggressors were supposed to be detachments of the Beni-Zouaoua, and many hoped that their evident taste for gunpowder might induce our general in command to accept their defiance,

march upon their territory, and chastise them. It was stated, indeed, that they desired nothing better than a visit from the Christian dogs; for that they were in great force, their country of exceedingly difficult access, and all the passes strongly barricaded with rocks, they being prepared, and determined, manfully to defend their homes.

Again, as the last rays of the sun fell upon the valley, mountain-fires glared on high, and flash after flash of musketry burst from the dark covert clothing the slopes at hand. A lamentable accident took place during the night. A company placed in ambush beyond one of the out-posts, perceiving a cavalier approach, and taking it for granted he was a Beni-Zouaoua, fired upon him, killing his horse, and grievously wounding himself, a ball having fractured both his thighs. Now this unfortunate fellow proved to be a friendly caïd, bearer of despatches from General Bedeau; and thus far had he run unscathed the gauntlet from one column to the other, and, faithful to his trust, fancied himself safely arrived at our bivouack, when he received the unlooked-for shot from the French ambuscade. He died in a few hours from the effect of his wounds.

As usual, the Kabaïles disappeared at the approach of daybreak; and marching on some two

or three leagues we bivouacked near Takbout, in which neighbourhood, upon our advance towards Bougie, the arrière-garde had been fired upon by the mountaineers. During the early part of the night the usual rattle of musketry from the outposts might be heard at intervals; but one or two of the assailants falling victims to their temerity, they withdrew with yells and shrieks of dissatisfaction, and the remainder of the night was passed in tranquillity.

Upon resuming the march the next morning, numerous Kabaïles might be seen upon two extremely rocky heights close at hand, between which we had to pass; and no sooner was the camp broken up, and the march commenced, than they fired upon the column with great good will. Now orders were issued not to return their fire; but the continual whistling of balls about our ears so aroused the blood of some, that it was difficult enough to enforce this order. However, very little firing took place on our side, and the Kabaïles remarking this, came boldly from behind their rocks, and might be seen openly perched here and there, loading and firing with the utmost sang-froid. One especially was so prominent and persevering in thus annoying us, that, seizing a carbine, I gallopped from the head of the squadron across

a piece of wheat towards him, to drive him from his post, but, the captain of the arrière-garde calling me to order, I was compelled to make a quick retreat; yet not before five or six Kabyle bullets had whistled by me, as this my too hasty action was remarked by these tenants of the rocks.

Onward we passed, leaving these mountain-sharp-shooters in our rear, doubtless much astonished at the silent contempt with which they had been treated. Yet they had not courage, or they did not deem themselves sufficiently strong, to come down from their aërial position to harass the arrière-garde, which it was much hoped they might do, and thus give a chance to the cavalry to fall upon them before they could regain their heights.

We arrived this day within the territory of the Beni-Abbés, and encamped once more at the foot of their hills. Upon our route we now often saw that elegant bird the kitawiah, or Conga partridge, with its long pin-tail and its throat marked with a yellow crescent. This beautiful bird had probably lately arrived from the desert, where it abides until the great heats come on, and then partially migrates into the more northern districts. One of them, which a soldier caught alive and gave to an officer,

quickly accustomed itself to its state of captivity. They are indeed remarkably foolish birds. We also observed during this march several Jerboas, which afforded much merriment, as, jumping with surprising swiftness, and darting from one place to another with their long tail stretched out in the air by way of rudder, they set at naught our endeavours to catch them. Vast numbers of these little animals may be found upon the sterile plains of the province of Oran; the desert, however, is their chief stronghold, for they delight in sandy places, and abhor man.

Our march this day had proved very fatiguing, for the heat was great, and a strong sirocco blew in angry gusts, raising, much to our annoyance, vast clouds of fine gravelly dust; for the Oued Mansour, along the borders of which our route now chiefly lay, becoming at this season in many parts a mere narrow shallow stream, is often flanked by broad tracts, over which the water spreads in vast sheets during winter, but which in summer present a loose scorched surface to the wind. From May until September the oppressive desert-wind sweeps at intervals across Algeria, varying in force and intensity of heat. Its approach is announced by reddish mists hanging about the mountain-tops to the South. Wild blasts of wind then succeed, scorching up

all vegetable production; the air is impregnated with fine sand brought from the wide Sahara, and a suffocating heat pervades the atmosphere, which now assumes a kind of copper colour. Man is struck with an enfeebling sensation, and a general aching of the limbs ensues. Upon delicate systems the effect of this wind is often very great. And let not the traveller, however good his constitution, sally forth when the signs of such a visitant are in the heavens; for it is a cruel task to man and beast to journey whilst this demon of the desert sports around him.

For three days once was I detained at Bône, in the province of Constantine, by a furious sirocco, accompanied with such impenetrable clouds of dust and sand that at a hundred yards' distance objects were barely distinguishable. The howling of these blasts during the night season, combined with the cracking of household furniture, and the oppressive state of the atmosphere, drives away sleep, and produces feverish restlessness. Fortunately, such visitations from the desert do not very frequently afflict in full severity the sea-coast regions. The Atlas, forming a kind of curtain to the Tell, somewhat mitigates their violence, in the same manner as it shields the desert from those vapours which, raised in the winter season by the northern winds from the

surface of the Mediterranean, drive on southward, until, arrested by this mountain-curtain, they resolve in rain, and disperse over the wide plains of the littoral.

From November until April, the north-north-west and north-east winds prevail along the sea-coast of Algeria, bringing rains and storms; the south-west and west, which are of comparatively rare occurrence, bringing generally a fine sky, but often blowing with great force. During the great heats, a pleasant breeze, setting in from the sea every morning about ten o'clock, and sinking with the sun, renders the temperature of the sea-coast of Algeria agreeable, and, in most parts, healthy. Where it is not so, it is to be accounted for by the neighbourhood of marshes, or the choked-up course of rivers, from which the heat of the sun draws a malaria engendering fevers, agues, and other diseases; the prevalence of which might easily, in most parts, be done away with by draining the marshes and opening proper issues for the waters of the rivers, the channels of which have for so many ages been neglected. The Romans, without doubt, paid much attention to this great cause of unhealthiness. Across the vast plain of the Metidja, behind Algiers, may be traced the line of a great Roman drain running from the

eastern to the western limits of the plain, which, with the aid of numerous tributary drains, served to carry off the stagnant waters of the plain, thus rendering it healthy and fertile, instead of being, as it now is again, in great part occupied by vast pestiferous marshes, productive of good to none but surly pigs and panthers.

CHAP. XII.

KABYLE GHOOLS AND GHOOLEHS. — NARRATIVE OF THE "PEERLESS CAMEL." — THE FOUL ASSASSINATION OF M. SALOMON.

THE Beni-Abbés paid no sort of attention to us during this our second visit. Indeed they had but too bitterly to lament such as they paid us at our first appearance amongst them. We found, however, that they had vented their revenge upon some of the dead bodies of the Christians who had fallen during our affair with them upon our passage to Bougie: they had been dragged out of the hasty graves made for them, and torn to pieces and burnt. A few of their mangled limbs, charred with fire, were found amongst the brushwood. Thus do these mountaineers wreak their ferocity upon the dead, when the living prove too powerful for them. They had, doubtless, held hideous orgies over these putrid carcasses, and danced like foul ghools around them, as they burned, blistered, and fell to pieces before the hungry flames. And then the women and little children gloated upon the

revolting remnants, and howled forth praises to Allah and their men of might.

The character of these people is evidently vindictive: revenge is their delight; and nothing is more inglorious than to abide in tranquillity unavenged, when an injury has been done them. Continual instances of the strength of this passion take place amongst them, both individually and between tribe and tribe. Deadly feuds rage amongst them, the origin of which is often most trifling, or altogether unrecorded. Mutual hatred descends from generation to generation as an heir-loom. Blood is continually shed in combats, and repeated and reciprocal robberies and devastation every day render this hatred more desperate and confirmed.

Such was the hereditary feud between the "Ouled-Abdel-Djebbar" and the "Beni-Idjer" tribes dwelling in the neighbourhood of Bougie. The cause of their hostility was veiled by time; every generation, however, contributed to render it more deadly, and the families of Ahmed-Ben-Mohammed, Caïd of the former tribe, and of Halled-Boursali, Caïd of the latter, above all, most virulently detested one another, their hereditary antipathy being added to by the following little incident which took place some years back: —

Boursali possessed a young camel of most surprizing beauty and docility, for the Caïd himself had fed and trained it with his own hands with the utmost care: it was indeed the pride of his heart. Now the Caïd Ahmed regarded this beautiful beast with an envious eye, and determined in his heart to obtain possession of it. Sending forth his spies, he directed them to discover where the flocks and herds of Boursali were led forth to pasture. It proved to be in a remote valley, at no great distance from the chief dashkrah of the Beni-Idjer; and the heart of Caïd Ahmed was filled with joy, when he was told that the flocks of his enemy were but ill-guarded, and that the beautiful camel was daily led forth with them. Gathering some of his boldest men about him, that very night they sallied forth, well armed, and, stealing into the territory of the Beni-Idjer, placed themselves in ambush upon the border of the valley mentioned as the place of pasturage. The watch-dogs of the Beni-Idjer bayed and howled, but it was attributed to the prowling lion or skulking hyæna approaching their dashkrah.

The tint of morning gilded the mountain-tops; the bleating of flocks reached the ears of Caïd Ahmed and his band, and presently, from their hiding-place, they saw the shepherds ap-

proaching the valley; but there were several of them besides the dogs, and Ahmed, fearing that one might escape and give the alarm, still lay quiet, trusting that some of them might withdraw. Fortune favoured the robber-chief; in a few hours one shepherd alone was left to guard the herds, and he, stretched upon the ground, was soon wrapped in sleep. Stealing forward from bush to bush, winding like serpents close upon the earth, onward crept Ahmed with his faithful band, for the moment was now come; the beautiful camel itself was quietly grazing near the sleeping shepherd.

But the dogs were there, more careful of their charge than the herd himself. Slight as was the movement made in the brushwood, they heard it, and, glancing suspiciously around, gave vent to low growls.

"Onward, onward!" whispered Ahmed, "and slay the shepherd! Death is silent!"

A moment's pause to allay the suspicions of the dogs, and onward they swiftly glided through the long grass. The dogs rushed upon them, but the murderous knife was buried to the haft in the body of the careless tender of the flocks, before he could rise from the earth. "Allah! Allah!" escaped from his lips, as with one convulsive throb he half bounded on his legs. His

cry to Allah was choked by the life-blood gushing from his mouth.

"God is great! but the Beni-Idjer will be brought upon us by these vile dogs," cried Ahmed, as they fiercely flew upon the marauders. "Slay them, drive off what cattle you are able, and away! Follow me, O sons of the brave!"

The guardian dogs, faithful even in death, lay bloody and gasping on the earth, but still endeavouring to draw their mangled bodies towards the robbers.

"Away! away!" shouted the chief; "the heavens will pour forth water, and behold the accursed Boursali will trace our footsteps and the steps of his cattle upon the softened earth; and he will cry aloud, 'The Abd-el-Djebbar have done this!' and he will fall upon us with his men of might, and there will be blood in our dashkrahs."

The rain now fell in torrents, and the followers of the Caïd were troubled; and they cried, "Assuredly the Beni-Idjer will pursue and fall upon us as we fly." But the wily chief led them across the mountains in an opposite direction to their tribe, driving his plunder onward, where possible, in the very bed of the streams, and, where this could not be done, causing his

band to follow trampling on the traces of the cattle. It is even reported that they sometimes drew the beasts backwards by their tails, in order to confound the Beni-Idjer. For two days and a night did he thus lead them by the most circuitous route, and then, having reached the borders of the Oued-el-Kebir, he drove his prey for miles up the stream, so as to leave no track of any kind. Arrived at last at their own dashkrah, the spoil was divided, Caïd Ahmed keeping to himself only the great object of this expedition, the peerless camel of Boursali. Songs of victory were chanted on high by the Abd-el-Djebbar; their very mountains rang with their rejoicings. "The Beni-Idjer are dogs; they sleep when the Abd-el-Djebbar are awake. We drink of the milk from the pastures of Boursali, and our knives are red with the blood of the Beni-Idjer; for Allah crowns the brave with glory!"

But the Beni-Idjer slept not. The sun had set, and their flocks returned not to their dashkrah at the wonted hour. Men of the tribe went forth to seek the lingering shepherd and his charge. The dead and mangled body of their brother and his faithful companions met their eyes; the flocks strayed wildly here and here, and numbers had altogether disappeared. The news was carried to Boursali. The chief tore his beard

with rage, and swore by his head that he would not close his eyes in sleep until he had taken a bloody vengeance upon the base marauders who had dared rob him of his favourite camel, the pride of his pastures. Seizing his arms, he started at once with the boldest of his tribe, and, following with the utmost difficulty the traces left by the wily Caïd Ahmed, they arrived at last upon the borders of the Oued-el-Kebir: here all trace was lost. The cunning chief searched narrowly for the slightest track of the fugitives, and distinguished in one place the foot-mark of his beloved camel. For a great distance they followed the stream, but to no effect. Furious with disappointment, Boursali madly raged, and called upon Allah to revenge him.

"Who thinkest thou, in the depth of thy heart, O Chief, hath done this thing?" demanded one of his most faithful followers.

"How can I say, O man! Does not my heart accuse the mortal enemy of my race, Ahmed-ben-Mohammed, Caïd of the Abd-el-Djebbar? but are we not far from his tribe, and do not the traces of my favourite camel even here point in an exactly opposite direction to his dashkrah?"

Seated upon the rocky banks of the Oued-el-Kebir, the cloud of sorrow upon their counte-

nances, the fierce band awaited the meditations of their chief, upon whose face a gleam of hope presently appeared. Raising his head, he stroked his venerable beard, and exclaimed aloud: —

"The Caïd, Ahmed-ben-Mohammed, is a wily robber; but Halled-Boursali is more wily than an Abd-el-Djebbar!"

Calling two of the boldest of his band, he said, "It is my mortal enemy who has done this thing. Go ye, disguised as strangers, to his tribe, saying that you come from a distant mountain. Enter the dashkrah of Ahmed himself, and you will behold if any of my cattle is there."

Abiding upon the borders of the river, Boursali awaited the return of these spies, who did as he directed. They arrived amongst the Abd-el-Djebbar in time to behold preparations making for a feast in honour of the descent upon Boursali's flocks. Moreover, they beheld with their own eyes the beautiful camel, and their hearts yearned for revenge as they looked upon it.

The following day, under the plea of continuing their journey, the spies left the dashkrah, and hastening to the banks of the Oued-el-Kebir, acquainted Boursali with their success, and of the intentions of the marauders to hold, in a few days, a feast and great rejoicings.

"Allah be praised!" cried the chief, "we, my sons, will partake of the feast, and their rejoicing shall be turned into wailing."

Now the dashkrah of the Caïd Ahmed was situated upon a hill-side thickly clothed with trees, brushwood, and long, coarse grass. Intense heat had succeeded the late rains, and the herbage had become dry and scorched. The very day appointed for the festival, Boursali arrived with his band in the vicinity of his enemies' dashkrah, and, as the sun sank behind the neighbouring mountains, he with his men crept onward towards his unsuspecting victims.

"When the *taar* and the *arabebbah* sound the signal for the evening-feast, we will be their guests," murmured Boursali to his followers.

Darkness now veiled the mountains, and the Abd-el-Djebbar were gathered together within the dashkrah of their chief, eager for the feast. In the meantime Boursali occupied his men in placing dried grass and brushwood in numerous heaps, encircling the branch-built huts of his most deadly foe. The sounds of the taar, struck by the joyous maidens of the tribe, rose on high, mingled with the wild strains of the gaspah, or reeden pipe. Fierce flames burst forth on every side as if by magic; the whole dashkrah was encircled with a belt of devour-

ing fire, which, swept onward by the night-wind, quickly gained the dried dwellings of the doomed revellers. The fierce Beni-Idjer were there, hovering like spectres around the flames, eager to cut off any that might break through the fiery circle.

"Ha! ha! thou robber of camels! Thou assassin-dog, Caïd Ahmed-Ben-Mohammed, I salute thee! Cold is the night-air upon the mountains for such as thou! Behold, I come to give thee fire! The scorpion, O Ahmed! is venomous, but it shall perish in the flames."

"God is great! oh dog of the Beni-Idjer; but the scorpion stings before he dies!" shouted Ahmed-Ben-Mohammed as with one furious bound towards Boursali he fired his long gun and stretched his hated foe dead upon the earth.

With grief and rage the Beni-Idjer beheld their chief fall. Fiercely the fire devoured the devoted dashkrah of the Abd-el-Djebbar. Those who fell not victims to the flames were slain in their endeavours to escape. Of Caïd Ahmed and his dashkrah not one was left. It was a bloody vengeance!

Wailings of women were also heard upon the mountains of the Beni-Idjer. With frantic ges-

tures rending their garments, they howled around the lifeless body of Boursali, for he was a great chief. The young men of the tribe sorrowed in their hearts, and their "eyelids gushed out with water" as they listened to the lamentations of the "mourning women;" for had they not lost a brave and wily leader?

One most glaring instance of Kabyle treachery and revenge was consummated close to the walls of Bougie, a few years back, by Mohammed Amzien, chief of the Oulid-ou-Rabah, a tribe dwelling on the upper banks of the Messaoud. The commanding officer at Bougie, M. Salomon, had held some correspondence and conference with this fierce chieftain, vainly hoping by diplomacy to lead him into an alliance. The crafty Amzien encouraged this idea on the part of the French commandant, and, to lull him into confidence, at one time sent him fourteen beeves as a present. Shortly after this a conference was agreed upon, by letter, to take place on the borders of the sea, between Bougie and the river. In the letter sent by the chieftain from one of the villages of the Beni-Abbés, with which tribe he was holding counsel upon his meditated treachery, he professed the greatest amiability, desire for peace, and affection

for M. Salomon, his intended victim, and coolly closed his missive with a request for some fine snuff scented with rose, some tobacco, and some sugar. The conference took place, M. Salomon being accompanied by one or two friends unarmed, and the treacherous Amzien by some twenty cavaliers. The French presents were distributed, and accepted with every token of friendship, coffee handed round, and protestations of good faith made. It was now drawing towards evening. With a feeling of distrust the doomed victims noticed the gradual crowding upon them of the chief's escort. It was too late! Amzien gave the fatal signal. A cavalier armed with a *tromblon*, or blunderbuss, and to whom the French commandant had shortly before given a dollar, admiring his fine appearance, stealthily leaned over his saddle-bow, placed his weapon close to the back of the commandant, and blew the upper part of his body to pieces, the tromblon being, as usual, loaded with ten or a dozen balls. As the victim fell, he received three other charges. The interpreter was killed also by a tromblon, and the other attendants of the unhappy commandant were all fearfully wounded, excepting one. The cry "Aux armes! aux armes!" was raised by the distant spectators of

the conference; but before the French dragoons could be in pursuit, the cowardly assassins had scattered, fled, and reached the thick covert. Such are the infernal *guet-à-pens*, by resorting to which these savages of North Africa have so often victimised the French intruders.

CHAP. XIII.

ANGLERS ROASTED. — CHIEFTAIN FLIES TREACHERY. — MOHAMMED-BEN-MAHIEDDIN SALUTES US. — CONSPIRATOR'S DOOM. — ARRIVAL AT ALGIERS.

As the column still pursued the same route upon this our return to Algiers as that which we had followed upon the advance towards Bougie, and as no very peculiar or serious incidents befel us by the way, it would prove but tedious to relate each day's progress. Here and there a few shots were fired upon the arrière-garde, or upon the camp, but almost always did those who fired keep so well out of harm's way, that their insults merely served to amuse us. "He that spitteth in the air, it falls betimes upon the spitter's nose." Those long shots brought nothing but self-contempt upon the heads of those who fired them; they wasted their powder and their lead, and must have felt remarkably small at the sovereign silence with which they were treated.

On the evening of the 1st of June, however, during which day some of these bush-rangers had ventured near enough to wound two or

three soldiers of the arrière-garde, four men were fallen upon and killed or captured whilst fishing in the river about a quarter of an hour from the camp. Others were missing: amongst them was one of the finest men of our squadron, but he afterwards returned. It was said, that, from one of the outposts, in the evening, the Kabaïles were seen busily engaged in roasting their victims before a large fire upon a neighbouring slope; but whether this was a fact or not I never learnt. That the Arabs and Kabaïles have often committed this atrocity with their French prisoners is true enough. But there were so many accomplished *blageurs*, or tellers of white lies, attached to the column, that it was often difficult to distinguish truth from falsehood.

Upon the 4th we encamped once more nigh unto the fort of Hamza, at the northern borders of the plain of that name, which is bounded in that direction by the inferior mountains of the western extremity of the Djurjura chain; on the South, by a forest called Noora, chiefly composed of ill-grown pine-trees, olives, locust-trees, junipers, and evergreen oaks; on the East, by the mountains of the Beni-Yaya; and on the west by the valley of the Isser. A portion of this plain is held by the Aribs, a tribe which originally came, it is said, from the Sahara.

I was somewhat surprised to observe in the wake of the column, the day of our arrival at Hamza, clouds of smoke bursting forth from the gourbies left in our rear. It was well known that the tribe upon whose territory we were had submitted, and that their shiekh was even riding at the head of the column. Upon inquiring why the corn-lands were not fired as well as the gourbies, it appeared that none could explain even the firing of the latter. Now the shiekh at the head of the column, looking back and beholding his villages on fire, showed as much astonishment as myself, and moreover was very wroth, probably saying within himself, "The Christians are traitors! Behold the fruit of submission; doubtless they will presently fall upon and slay me and my people. Fly, O mare! fly with the wings of the wind, for thy lord is betrayed." Like the lightning-flash, he dashed off and was lost to sight. It appeared that some soldiers of the arrière-garde had done this thing to revenge their comrades who had been assassinated in this neighbourhood upon our former passage that way.

It was remarkable that a thunder-storm burst over our bivouack at the fort of Hamza, commencing at the same hour, and enduring about

the same time as the storm which we experienced upon our former bivouack at the same spot, and since which we had not had a drop of rain. Upon leaving Hamza we made a slight détour into the mountains to the north-east of the fort, in order to intimidate a fraction of the Beni-Aisa who dwell there. This tribe is said to be divided into six fractions, four of which had rendered submission, the other two remaining in doubt. To dispel these doubts was the object of this movement of the column. After marching for an hour or two over hills and valleys clothed with brushwood of lentisk and evergreen oak, beneath which grew vast quantities of the gay-flowered coronilla and gum-cistus, we arrived at the border of a narrow valley, upon the opposite slope of which were numerous gourbies, vis-à-vis which we encamped, and cut the corn around for forage. Cavaliers appeared in groups upon the heights beyond, seemingly holding consultation as to the best course to pursue. The population of the gourbies, some of which were very extensive, had not fled, excepting from one or two of very small dimensions upon our side of the valley. No symptoms of hostility were shown, and towards the afternoon the Sheikhs of the tribe, deeming it wise to put an end to their doubts, and thus save their

gourbies, and the rest of their corn, came down to the camp, and, kissing the skirts of General Gentil's garments, swore fealty to the French. It was on this day that a courier arrived from Algiers, bearing Marshal Bugeaud's last adieu to the army of Africa, which was read throughout the camp, as before stated.

Upon the 7th, there being no longer any fear of further hostilities upon our route, the cavalry and Arab goum left the infantry in the rear, and making a long march, bivouacked in a little valley called "El-Hâd," to the right of the new road cut from Algiers to Aumale, or Sour-Gouzelan, "the Walls of the Antelopes," as the Arabs call it. Upon a mount to the left of this bivouack was a cluster of little wooden barracks, surrounded by a rampart of earth, a company of French soldiers being posted there, and occupied in works upon this new route. From their stores we were fortunate enough to obtain some bread and wine, which we had not tasted for some days, haricot beans *à discrétion* having been our chief fare.

As we entered the valley, the great Sheikh, Sidi Mohammed Ben-Mahieddin, suddenly appeared with a numerous goum. These cavaliers, charging towards us at full speed, reined their steeds up short before our leader, and saluting

him, cried, "Peace be with you! God prolong the days of our lord and master!" then swiftly turning, they dashed off again, firing, shouting, and twirling their guns in the air.

Upon the banks of a little stream we pitched our tents amidst oleanders and tamarisk. Nigh at hand was an arba, or market-place, of the tribe, with one or two huts of branches and earth, where coffee and chibouks might be obtained by such as indulged in those luxuries. Several hundred Arabs were at this time gathered together here: the chief objects for sale appeared to be haïks, burnooses, corn, figs, oranges, vegetables, and chickens; the predominant vegetables were leeks, of which there were amazing quantities.

In the course of the evening, a long file of Arabs marched solemnly into the bivouack, each bearing upon his head a huge wooden dish of cous-cousso, the pilau of this country. This was a mona, or gift, sent by Mahieddin to the Christian soldiers; a hecatomboian feast, indeed, upon which the men fell tooth and nail with right good will.

Now Mahieddin is regarded by many of his neighbours, and moreover by many of his own subjects, as a renegade and a traitor in the eyes of Allah and his country; for had he not entered

into alliance with the defiling Christians? Seven of his subjects, therefore, vowed a vow to eat no bread until they had slain him, and so they put poison into his meats: but the chief discovered the conspiracy, and seizing the conspirators, bound them in chains, and condemned them to starve to death. Some of the officers went to see these patriotic victims lingering out their miserable existence, their place of confinement being a cave close at hand.

In the afternoon of the day following, we once more gazed from the heights of the Beni-Moussa, upon the wide-spreading plain of the Metidja, and the glorious sea beyond. The white buildings around Algiers itself were easily distinguishable, and upon the bosom of her spacious bay floated a squadron of majestic ships of war under the command of his royal highness the Prince de Joinville. This welcome scene added vigour to the troops; a general shout of satisfaction burst forth. The trumpets played soul-inspiring airs, and merry songs were shouted forth in one wild chorus. It had been a long and fatiguing march, but the goal was now at hand; and after having traversed mountain after mountain for twelve long leagues, we commenced the descent to the plain below, pitched our tents once more upon the Metidja, and the following

morning crossed the plain, and made a triumphant entry into Algiers, a cavalcade of officers riding forth to meet us, with a band of music at their head.

Every house and barrack as we passed poured forth its tenants, "omnes omnia bona dicere." Congratulations and enquiries for the safety of friends were mingled with rapturous embraces. Long and grisly moustaches were rubbed together on all sides in the most endearing manner, when, dismounting at the cavalry quarters in the fauxbourg of Mustapha, we stretched our legs. Two days later the infantry marched into Algiers, and thus the much-talked-of expedition into the "Grand Kabylie" had really been accomplished.

CHAP. XIV.

A WORD UPON THE COLONY.

THE chief view of the government of Charles X. in projecting the descent upon Algiers, was doubtless to open a kind of safety-valve to that effervescence of liberal spirit which then reigned throughout his dominions, by raising before the eyes of his warlike and excited subjects brilliant visions of "la gloire" to be grasped in a foreign land; thus diverting their attentions from broodings of a dangerous tendency, by drawing them, body and mind, beyond the threshold of their own country. It was not, however, until 1842 that the conquest and occupation of Algeria was formally announced in the speech from the throne, and ratified by the Chambers in their address. Until that period the plans of the government with regard to the final occupation of the country seemed very undetermined, every discussion in the Chambers upon the course to be adopted with regard to it being fraught with irresolution and doubt.

The beginning of 1842, then, is the era to

which the serious commencement of colonisation is to be strictly referred; though, indeed, before that period, several routes had been opened with the three provinces, and one or two villages had been constructed, though boasting of but scanty populations, unless we include the tenants of the large barracks and hospitals, which were their most prominent buildings. In that year, however, villages sprang up like mushrooms within the vicinity of the town of Algiers, and the cultivation of the "Massif," or highland, at the back of the city, forming a rampart between the plain of the Metidja and the Mediterranean, was taken in hand; whilst more adventurous settlers, tempted by the superior fertility of the soil, resorted to Bouffarick and Beni-Méred, stations upon the route to the town of Blidah, which lies at the foot of the Little Atlas, some five or six hours' ride South of Algiers across the Metidja. This wide plain may be computed to contain about 1,500,000 acres of arable and pasture-land, of which, though one of the most favourite and tempting resorts of the agricultural colonist, at the present time but a very small portion is cultivated*, and that but in a very miserable

* Before the French occupation, vast tracks which now lie waste, sacrificed to palmetta and squills, were cultivated by the Arabs, who grew far more corn than was required

manner; the reason being in a great measure, that labourers are extremely scarce, and wages consequently at a very high rate. This fact may be esteemed one of the great drawbacks to the progress of the colony; for though the emigrant may obtain his land for a trifle, yet two or three years of cultivation is necessary before any return will be yielded him, and the low price of the land by no means balances the enormous expense of labour; and labour is of necessity dear, for the necessaries of life within the colony command a higher price than in the mother-country; and whilst such is the case, how can a colony prosper?

The port of Algiers is not a free port, and the French Chambers, instead of encouraging commerce with their new colony, have, by raising the duties on articles of foreign manufacture (in order to keep their own in the market), especially with regard to English cottons, succeeded in driving away commerce from the ports of Algiers to those of Tunis, Tripoli, Tangiers, and Mogador; thus at the same time cutting off

for their own consumption; whereas now they grow barely sufficient, the consequence of which is, that the price of corn is enormous in Algeria at present. I have heard officers, who have been in Algeria since the earliest occupation, assert that the Metidja is a perfect desert in contrast to what it was when first they saw it as held by the Arabs.

from the ports of French Algeria commercial relations with Central Africa. For the tribes of the interior prefer carrying on their traffic with the above-named ports, where they can get goods cheaper and of a better quality than in the French markets, although Algiers would be the most direct route for their European traffic.

To the short-sighted policy of the French government with regard to the commercial relations with Algeria, may then be ascribed much of the difficulty impeding the progress of the colony.

Another and great reason for the slow growth of the colony, is the extreme tardiness with which the administrative forms requisite to the establishment of emigrants are carried out. For instance, though assignments of land are promised, yet a year or eighteen months after application frequently elapses before the grantees are put into possession. The majority of those arriving from the mother-country having but very small capital, it in the intermediate period disappears; they are compelled to devour it to keep body and soul together; and when it is gone their assignment may be allotted them with the parental advice, "There sit ye down, increase and multiply:" but it comes too late; their only prospect is starvation, and they are fortunate if

sufficient remains to them to permit them to shake the dust from off their feet, and fly the inhospitable shore, thus preventing others from arriving; for will they not return with outcry and relations of their sufferings? It is even a fact well known to all, that men of capital, rich French proprietors, arriving in Algeria under the auspices of the Minister of War, have remained as long as *five* or *six* years before being able to obtain a promised concession. Others, again, established provisionarily upon a tract of land, the assignment of which has been promised them, have built upon it, cultivated portions of it, and otherwise fulfilled all required conditions; when at last the definite answer is given them — the title to it is *refused!* Being able neither to alienate nor to mortgage, they have thus been brought to ruin.

The generally desolate state of those *poor* emigrants who do become established in Algeria is painful enough. The villages scattered about the Sahel or Massif of Algiers are, with one or two exceptions, the type of desolation. Perched upon the most arid spots, distant from water, there the poor tenants lie sweltering beneath sun and sirocco, wondering, as their haggard eyes rove across vast tracts of inexterminable palmetta and prickly bushes, what there is there "to in-

crease and multiply" upon, as recommended. Visionary hopes of bettering their situation in life have tempted them from their native soil, from their home, from the friends of their heart, for what? To starve, and that in exile! Invited to emigrate, their souls are elate with hope and courage, for they have drunk deeply of the bitter cup of poverty in their fatherland. They dare the seas and the miseries of a deck-passage for the sake of the hungry little partakers of the wretchedness allotted them in this world. They reach the "promised land," they look for "milk and honey," and find palmetta and disease. They cry for assistance from the administration, but find none, or very insufficient. Mortification and dearth crush their hearts within them; the body is racked by the wretchedness and despair of the mind; the climate attacks them; the demon fever hovers around; like a vulture waiting for a carcase, it falls upon them, clings to its prey, and devours their life-blood. The heart of the victim heaves as he dreams of the home he has deserted, lowly indeed, but a paradise to the desert he has been dropped upon — and, presently, he dies where he hoped to find new life; and he dies cursing the administration, and with reason, for the administration is the assassin! This is highly painted, perhaps, but is too true a picture

of the emigrant's fate in Algeria, if left to the tender mercies of the "Administration Civile" of that colony.

The calls upon the French treasury made by the vast army in Algeria, may account in some measure for the beggarly sums devoted by government to the encouragement of emigration and the establishment of villages. Neither sufficient grants of land, nor sufficient after-assistance, is given to the poor emigrant, who without a fair start can never be expected to prosper.

The annual expenses of the colony are computed to amount to at least a hundred million. The budget for Algeria published this year (1847) for 1848, places under the head "La Colonisation" only the sum of one million seven hundred and thirty-four thousand francs. Though further sums will doubtless be extracted by means of special "projets de loi."

Algeria is divided administratively into three zones; the population of the first being chiefly European; this is the *civil territory* or zone: the second by Arabs and a few Europeans; this is the *mixed territory:* the third by Arabs only, this is the *Arab territory*, par excellence. The administration of the first is the principal and most serious, and this is pronounced by all, and

especially by the Commission charged this year (1847) with the examination of affairs in Algeria, to be defective, imperfect in its functions, complicated in its system, slow in its working, making much ado about nothing, doing little, and that little badly. The functionaries of whom it is composed are pronounced ignorant of the language, usages, and history of the country, and unacquainted with the duties imposed upon them. Their proceedings, instead of being rapid and simple, as so necessary in a new colony, are ill-advised, ill-executed, and supereminently slow. The latter defect is chiefly attributable, perhaps, to the fact that the centralisation of affairs is in Paris, and all the acts must be referred to the head bureau there before the least move of the most trivial nature can be effected. During the last year only, above twenty-four thousand despatches were received from thence by the "Administration Civile," and above twenty-eight thousand sent to Paris by this branch-affair in Algiers.

The immense number of functionaries appertaining to the corps of civil administrators in Algeria is astonishing. At the present period there are above two thousand; yet there is a cry that they are insufficient: and so they may be — but not in *number*. The pay of this corps

is a heavy item upon the "budget de l'Etat." For the past year it has amounted to above six hundred thousand francs; and it is computed that they have devoured, since the occupation, above five million; the European population to whom their administration is confined amounting to little more than one hundred thousand.

The quantity of gold and silver which falls into the hands of the Arab population of Algeria, never to return in any shape, assists in beggaring the colony, and is indeed a much more serious evil than is generally supposed. The Arab comes to the markets with horses, cattle, fowls, burnooses, dried figs, oil, &c., for which he receives French gold, no exchange of products taking place; for all luxuries are totally unrequired by the Arab. Nature has accustomed him to satisfy himself with the simplest and most scanty food and raiment; he therefore bags the hard coin, puts it into a bottle, or vase, and buries it stealthily in the earth, either within or in the neighbourhood of his douar. Those of the indigenous population, whether Arabs or negroes (and their name is Legion), employed in the towns of Algiers, make great gainings, and dispose of them in the same manner. It is computed that several millions of francs are thus annually lost to the French coffers in this way.

Of the seven or eight millions of francs annually consecrated to the payment of the native troops, viz. —

Batallion of Tirailleurs -	2952	Officers and men;
Three regiments of Spahis -	2790	
Cavalry, infantry, and Makzen, &c. -	2533	men,

a great portion is, in very great measure, also disposed of in the same manner.

The number of the indigenous inhabitants employed in the French towns are, as I have stated, very considerable. In Algiers there are six distinct races, who are organised into six distinct corporations, each race employing themselves in particular manual professions.

There are *Kabaïles*, chiefly from the country we had now just returned from traversing: these are employed as terrace-makers, workers of mortar, and carriers of burthens.

Secondly, the *Mozabites* or *Beni-Mezzab*, from the far South of Algeria; who are employed in the baths, or as butchers, roasters of coffee, charcoal sellers, and ass-drivers. This race comes from a territory in the centre of the Sahara Algérien; the chief city of their district being "Gardaia," which is some ninety leagues to the west of Tougourt. These people are of a sect called Melaki, and are not allowed to enter the sacred buildings of the Algerine Moslems, or otherwise mingle in their religious ceremonies.

Thirdly, the *Biskri*, who inhabit the Oasises of the Zâab of Biskra, the farthest French out-post south of Constantine. These are employed especially as porters of marine stores, and may be seen in crowds near the Quay of Algiers, bearing burthens of the most astonishing weight, for which they seem adapted by nature, being generally of low stature, wonderfully broad-chested, bull-necked, and very muscular.

Fourthly, *Negroes;* employed chiefly as slakers of lime, white-washers of houses, &c.

Fifthly, a Kabyle race called *Mzita*, who, at the "Rhaba," or wheat market, act as measurers and carriers.

Sixthly, the *Laghouats*, from the desert, ten leagues south of Algiers, who are employed at the "Fondouk-ez-zit," or oil market.

Each of these little corporations in the city of Algiers is placed under a chief, who is charged with the police of his individual corporation, under the direction of the French authority.

By the census of 1843, the indigenous Moslem residents in the towns, or in the environs of the towns of Algeria, and ranked under the title of "Hadars" or citizens, were as follows:—

Province of Algiers - -	34,555
Constantine - - -	18,781
Oran - - - -	9,766

CHAP. XV.

EXTENT OF ALGERIA.—STATISTICAL NOTES.—FEATURES OF COUNTRY.—TELL AND SAHARA.

THE extent of Algeria from East to West, including the Grand Kabylia or Kabylie, is between two hundred and forty and two hundred and fifty French leagues; and in breadth from North to South, that is to say, from the sea to the Little Sahara, it varies from forty to sixty leagues, containing, according to Marshal Bugeaud's computation, an Arab population of from three to four million, though others reckon it at much less or much greater. About two-thirds of this territory presents a surface of rugged and wild mountains, intersected, however, in many parts, by fertile vallies.

At the present period, the European population amounts to about 109,400, chiefly confined to the littoral zone.

In the *Tableau des Etablissements en Algerie* for the year 1845, the sum of the indigenous population figures as follows:—

Province of Constantine -	- 1,016,716
Province of Algiers - -	- 490,168
Province of Oran - -	- 477,034

thus yielding a total of 1,983,918. But to this amount are to be added the populations of such portions of the territory as, from the state, position, or character of the districts, it has not been possible to form a calculation of; as, for instance, the Kabylie, portions of the Sahara Algérien, and others. Including these omissions, the total population is given in the rough at three million; of which from three to four hundred thousand are supposed to be fighting men, upon the calculation of *one* in every *seven*, which is probably an exaggeration; though, indeed, children of tender years have often been found fighting bravely by the side of their aged fathers.

The following is the table of the European population in each province, and in the chief towns, as given by the census of the 31st of December, 1846.

Province of Algiers: Algiers, 68,734; Dellys, 308; Bougie, 511; Cherchel, 967; Tenes, 2,555; —Total for the province, 73,075.

Province of Constantine: Bône, 6,006; Philippeville, 5,003; La Calle, 233; Gigelly, 265;—Total for the province, 11,507.

Province of Oran: Oran, 18,259; Mostaganem, 3,614; Arzew, 301; Djemmâa-Ghazaouat, 412;—Total for the province, 22,586.

This presents a total general of 107,168: to which are added 2,232 for Europeans scattered about in the interior, thus making up the amount given, viz. 109,400.

The augmentation of the European population during the last *trimestre* (three months) of 1846 is given at 3,858 individuals.

The augmentation, however, for 1846 has been less than that of the preceding year, there being an increase, in 1845, of 20,699 individuals; in 1846, of 14,079: thus shewing a superior amount of 6,620 individuals for the year 1845.

Since the year 1830, Algeria has swallowed up no less than 1,000,000,000 fr. of French treasure.

The revenue derived from the colony has progressed as follows:—

	Fr.	Cents.
In 1840 the amount was - -	5,610,707	37
1841 - - - -	8,859,190	49
1842 - - - -	11,608,478	40
1843 - - - -	15,964,425	68
1844 - - - -	17,695,996	58
1845 - - - -	20,425,423	30
1846 - - - -	24,773,625	28

Presenting a total for the six years of Marshal

Bugeaud's administration of one hundred and five millions.

The annual progression of Arab impost, which enters into the above sum, indicates the progress of the war, and stands thus: —

	Fr.	Cents.
In 1841 it produced - - -	658,561	50
1842 - - - -	949,592	74
1843 - - - -	1,935,425	62
1844 - - - -	3,237,702	6
1845 - - - -	4,096,482	91
1846 - - - -	5,274,306	93

The best general geographical description of Algeria is perhaps that of the late M. Jouffroy, inserted in the "Révue des Deux Mondes," June 1838. — "In looking upon the map of Algeria, it may be seen that this country, which stretches in length between the Great Atlas and the sea about two hundred and fifty leagues, with a mean depth of sixty leagues, is divided from one extremity to the other into two regions by the chain of the Little Atlas; the superior region lying between the Great and Little Atlas, and the inferior or maritime between the Little Atlas and the sea-coast. If one seeks for the communications granted by nature between these two regions, he will find only dark defiles, by which at three or four points the waters of the first region find their way to the sea. These issues, opened by the

force of the water, are occupied by it. Man can hardly venture there; and thus the two regions which these issues were intended to unite are still left isolated. The division does not stop there. From the intermediary chain of the Little Atlas are thrown out to the North and to the South numerous branch-ranges, towards the Great Atlas on one side and towards the sea on the other, which cut these two regions into a multitude of vallies, with no common communication between them; in such sort that the country, divided into two long halves by the Little Atlas, and subdivided into numerous fractions by these branch ranges, resembles somewhat a chess-board depicted by the mountains, natural barriers being thus offered to the communication of the population inhabiting it. You may search in vain for a natural centre to this country, so cut up; nature has refused it. Neither are secondary centres to be found. All the maritime region is composed of narrow vallies running to the sea, and which, ranged side by side, resemble the stalls of a stable. Each one has its river or rather its torrent, flowing from the far-end, and following a direct line to the sea-coast. The vallies of the superior region are more extensive by reason of the waters, which, kept back by the barrier of the Little Atlas, have formed vast basins. But

they do not communicate one with another; each is a little world in itself: and to command two contiguous ones, it is necessary to establish oneself upon the chain dividing them."

From the sea-coast of Algeria to forty or fifty leagues inland is denominated the Tell (*i. e.* land fit for cultivation and production of grain), computed to present a surface of about sixteen million hectares, there being about two and a half English acres to the hectare.

Though, in France, the population is only about two to each three hectares, the superior fertility of the soil and climate of Africa is such, however, as to allow the calculation of one to each hectare. Thus there is a surface presented on the Tell for a future population of sixteen million souls.

From the Tell to the Great Sahara is denominated the Little Desert, or Little Sahara: this district bearing the title of *desert*, because unproductive of *grain*, though otherwise fruitful in parts, and thickly populated.

That power which holds the Tell may be considered to rule in great measure the destinies of the desert beyond; for the inhabitants of the desert and the Tell are very dependent upon one another, and the former by nature's edict much more so upon the latter than *vice versâ*;

the products of the desert being but objects of luxury, such as dates, clothing, &c., whilst those of the Tell are necessaries of life, as corn, &c. Hence the tribes of the desert have a proverb:—"He is our lord, who is lord of our mother, and our mother is the *Tell.*"

Nearly all the Sahara tribes pay an annual visit, therefore, to the Tell. During winter and spring they find water and vegetation in the desert; and moving about from spot to spot, remaining at each according to the extent of water and pasture, they exist. But towards the end of spring, when the wells commence sinking, and the sun to scorch up the herbage, they resort to the towns in the oases of the desert, charge their camels with dates and stuffs, and migrate towards the North with their women, flocks, tents, and all their "household gods." They arrive in the Tell at harvest-time. There they remain during the summer, pitching their black tents, and thoroughly establishing themselves for the season. Corn is then plentiful there, and at a low price if the year has been favorable. Active commerce is carried on; dates and stuffs are exchanged for grain, raw wool, cattle, &c. The great heats pass, the summer is at anend; and now bustle and life reign throughout their douars, for the signal of departure is

given by the heavens. It is to them a joyful signal, for are they not children of the desert? Quickly the camels are loaded; the dark cities disappear; and, heavily charged with the treasures of the fat Tell, they again retire towards the South. About the middle of October, they greet once more their remote homes: the dates are ripe; they remain a month amongst their palm-groves to harvest the fruit; they exchange their grain and raw wool for dates of the year, burnooses, haïks, and other manufactured wool, which they leave in magazines within the oasis; and then bidding adieu to their mud-built towns, they retire with their flocks, and tents, into the depths of the desert, again to wander here and there, from pasture to pasture, from well to well, until the heat of the sun once more warns them of the approach of summer, and the arrival of the period to revisit their great mother, the Tell.

Such is the routine of the existence of these truly nomade tribes. Such is the general law of their movements; such their commerce; and thus does this wandering people enjoy an eternal summer: for may not the winter be considered the true summer of the desert? It is then alone that there is water and vegetation. The great heats arriving, the springs are dried up in their beds: the desert is then a desert indeed:

all herbage droops and dies beneath the fiery sun, excepting the tall date-palms, which, encircled by water, led, by artfully cut channels, from the only living fountain within perhaps several days' journey, offer refreshing though confined groves, beneath which flourish the red pepper plant, millet, and water-melons, affording sufficient subsistence for a limited population.

CHAP. XVI.

ORGANISATION OF ARAB TRIBES IN ALGERIA.*

WITH regard to the Arab tribes, decendants of that vast host which, in the latter part of the seventh century, leaving vanquished Egypt in their rear, rushed onward, to the overthrow of the Byzantine and the Berber armies, from Cyrene to Tangiers, and planted the standard of religious fanaticism upon the very shores of the Atlantic, they may be divided into three distinct classes, viz., those inhabiting the Tell, those holding the plateaus in the more elevated districts, and those truly nomade tribes, children of the desert, of whom we have spoken in the last chapter.

The first are agriculturists, inhabiting that portion of Northern Africa called the Tell, bounded by the Mediterranean on the North, and by the mountains of the Lesser Atlas on the South. This tract of country is of the greatest natural fertility, well adapted for the pasturage

* The information contained in this chapter is chiefly derived from some able papers published in the "*Révue de l'Orient*," by the *Société Orientale* at Paris.

of horned cattle, and also for the production of grain. The second class feed their herds upon the mountain-plateaus, before referred to, lying between the Tell and the Little Desert; which, though not rich in grain, yet present spots affording excellent pasture. Of the third class we have already spoken.

The influence of blood-relationship, an aristocratic form of government, and the love of a roving life, are common to all these races; though the Tellias, as agriculturists, are less addicted to this latter quality than the second class, who, as shepherds, are continually under the necessity of changing their positions, in order to seek fresh pasture-grounds. Many of the tribes, into which each of these classes is divided, are both numerous and powerful; but, like the wild clans of American Indians, the vicissitudes of their mode of life, hereditary diseases, and continued wars amongst themselves, have reduced some of them to a state bordering on extinction, and altogether buried others in oblivion.

As to their social condition, the heads of families are regarded with great respect by their offspring, who, settling around the patriarch's tent, together with his connexions and slaves, form, in course of time, a *douar* (or circle of tents) of which he is the sheikh (a title signi-

fying senior or elder), and over the domestic economy of which he holds independent authority. When, for the sake of reciprocal protection or otherwise, several douars unite, this union takes the name of *farka*, and then the sheikhs form together a *Djemâa* (or council), to watch over the common interest of the farka; one amongst them, on account of either his superior nobility, age, intellect, or uprightness of life, generally being nominated the head of such assembly.

Nobility of blood is especially held in great consideration by these wild but aristocratic people. Thus, all descendants of Fathma, the daughter of Mahomet, and of Sidi-Ali-ben-ebi-Thaleb, his brother, rank as nobles of the first order, and bear the title of *Sherif* or *Sidi*; the latter word signifying lord or master. Amongst the chief privileges they enjoy, is the right of being judged by their peers in case of infringement of the laws. Descendants of the *Koraiche*, or tribe to which the prophet belonged, or of such tribes as accompanied the first planting of the standard of Islamism in Western Africa, also rank as nobles, but of the military order. Again, there is another order of nobles, viz., the *Marabouts* or *Marrabbutts*, a word said to be derived from the Arabic verb "*rbth*" (to devote oneself), the participle of which verb is "*mrbth*." These are the lords spiritual of the Arab aristocracy, and may

rank in influence as superior to all other orders. They are devoted to the preservation of their faith; lead austere lives dedicated to study, and the teaching of the law of Mahomet; and moreover, according to the belief of their superstitious disciples, they possess the power of working miracles, and of prophecy. These men are surrounded with a halo of sanctity during their life, and after death their *cubbas*, or tombs, are places of prayer for the pilgrim, of refuge for the criminal, resorts for all devout Moslems, and points of assembly for the elders of the farkas in their neighbourhood. Upon the wood-clothed slopes of the Atlas, upon the wide-spreading plains of Algeria, the white domes of these sacred sepulchres frequently attract the eye of the wanderer.

A profound veneration for religion is planted in the Arab breast; so profound indeed, that it amounts to fanaticism. The utter negligence shown until lately by the French occupants in allowing themselves to be regarded as a nation of infidels, doubtless has rendered them still more odious in the eyes of the Arab than if they had upheld the honours of Christianity. Loving to be compared with the ancient Romans, why should they forget the exclamation of Rome's greatest moralist, Cicero:—"Pietate ac reli-

gione, atque hâc unâ sapientiâ, quod deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus?"

It has been well observed by a French writer, "Les Arabes ne peuvent pas comprendre un état sans religion. Quand ils virent que nous ne professions ancun culte, ils en conclurent que nous n'étions pas une société, mais une agglomération de mécréants." Monsieur l'Abbé Suchet, who in 1842 nobly ventured to present himself in the camp of Abd-el-Kader, between Tak'dempt and Mascara, to demand the release of fifty-six of his countrymen then in the hands of the Emir, remarks that wherever he passed his title of priest was venerated. And to that might probably in great measure be attributed the immediate deliverance of his countrymen without ransom.

But to return from this digression. The Marrabbutts often unite and form a douar, or even when very numerous a farka, in the neighbourhood of a chapel or tomb, sacred to the memory of some deceased brother. There they instruct a certain number of youth in the law, and exist upon the produce of lands bestowed upon them, and upon such pious donations as they may receive. They are bound to hospitality and to shelter those in distress. They also

celebrate marriages, pronounce divorces, &c. The pupils of this priesthood are entitled *tolbas* (or learned men). All the above orders of nobility are hereditary amongst the Arabs.

As to the present organisation of the Arabs, the late invasion of their shores by a Christian host, superior in discipline and in the art of war, together with the determination shown to form a settlement within the limits of their country, caused the Moslem to tremble for his liberty and faith. The troublous times, however, soon produced a leader, who, with the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other, placed himself at their head, rousing them to war against the Infidel. Of the sacred order of the Marrabbutts, remarkable for austerity of life, for profound knowledge as a taleb, and for valour, tribe after tribe readily flocked to his standard to wage the Holy War. Ambitious as brave, Abd-el-Kader soon aspired to the title of Emir, prince or head of the state, proving himself of noble blood and of the lineage of the former Sultans of Tak'dempt. Sagacious as ambitious, he saw that to consolidate his power it was necessary to create delegates, who, bound by fear and interest, might bring into a proper state of organisation his wild subjects. With this view he divided his empire into districts and subdivisions; viz., into *Khalifats*,

Aghaliks, and *Kaidats*, creating a hierarchy endued with extensive but wisely-graduated authority. The members of this hierarchy, to avoid offending the aristocratic feelings of the Arab, were carefully chosen from such families as rightfully inherited influence in their respective tribes.

The French, perceiving the policy of the Emir, and the difficulties as well as danger of introducing at present and suddenly a perfectly new system of organisation with relation to such tribes as have become subject to them, have wisely based their system on that of the Emir, merely retaining sufficient authority by the introduction of certain French agents as proof of conquest. As, in course of time, peace and civilisation advance and hatred for the Christian diminishes, by contact, conciliation, introduction of science and European language and manners, and above all, by the careful administration of justice, such authority may, it is imagined by many, gradually be extended, until ultimately every office of authority over the indigenous inhabitants may be held by French representatives. Ages must pass, however, before this dream can be realised with the slightest hope of success: indeed, a total change wrought in the character of the Arab by the progress of generations can alone sustain this hope. In their present state, what-

ever may be their reverses, and to whatever humiliation they may be forced under adverse circumstances to submit, yet it is to be remembered that they only regard the French invasion as a passing cloud, the advent of which has been foretold by more than one of their prophets. They bow to destiny, but "bide their time." They await the passing of the cloud, with the full assurance that the bright sun of prosperity will then burst forth with renewed splendour. "Bow thy head before the manifest superiority of thy enemies; but raise it again more proudly than ever when the triumph of Islamism can be assured," is a precept of their prophet never forgotten by them.

The Turkish government divided the regency of Algiers into four provinces, viz.:—Algiers, Oran, Constantine, and Titteri. Each of these was governed by a Bey, as representative of the Dey. In 1843, by decision of the minister of war, the French possessions in North Africa were reduced to three divisions, viz.: that of *Algiers*, containing two sub-divisions, Algiers and Titteri; that of *Oran*, containing the subdivisions of Oran, Mascara, Mostaganem, and Keman; that of *Constantine*, containing the subdivisions of Bône and Setif. Each of these divisions and subdivisions is submitted to the

authority of a military commander; second in authority to whom is an indigenous chief entitled Khalif, Bach-Agha, or independent Agha, the two latter titles being borne by such as, though their authority is equal to that of Khalif, yet govern but smaller territories.

These authorities are invested with office by the King, through the Governor-General, upon the nomination of the commandant of the division within which they are to act; they are stipended by France, and liable to be deposed by the authority of the Governor-General. When called upon with their cavaliers to join the French forces in the progress of the war, they are dependant upon the orders of the French commandants. In their judicial capacity, they can inflict fines, revise the judgments of the aghas, caïds, &c. of the territory they govern, and are responsible for the regular payment of impost, &c.

The territory thus governed by the Khalif is divided into *Aghaliks*, ruled by aghas. The Agha is invested with his authority in the name of the King, and liable to suspension by the French commander of the division; his duty is to act upon the orders of the Khalif, or direct orders from the French authority; he arranges the military affairs of the Khalifat, sees that punishments ordered by the Khalif are duly

executed, has the power to inflict fines to a certain amount, renders account to the Khalif of complaints made against the Caïd beneath him, arranges the collection of impost, &c.

Each Aghalik is again divided into *Kaidats*, governed by caïds, who are invested with authority by the commandant of the division, upon the proposal of the chief of the sub-division. This office is annual, and the same caïd is reinstated or not, according to circumstances. Upon his investiture he has to provide a horse fit for military service, as acknowledgment of vassalage to the French: he then receives the burnoose and seal of authority from the government. The origin of this feudal-like custom is, that during the Turkish dominion this officer, before investiture, paid an acknowledgment in money, a custom which was persevered in by the Emir. The caïd has to see that the warriors of his tribe are ready for service, and to command them during war; is responsible for the execution of all orders issued by his superiors; is charged with the interior police of the tribe, particularly that of the markets, where he is obliged to be present, either in person or by his lieutenant; has to decide controversies between the douars of the tribe in cases of small importance, and to refer to the Agha those of greater weight: he

has also the power of arresting criminals, of whom he must render count to the Agha, and that officer to the French authority: he has also the right to inflict corporal punishment and fines to a certain amount, &c. For his laborious duties he is remunerated by a portion of the revenue produced by fines, market-duties, and a tenth of certain imposts, which are shared with him by the Agha, and the Sheikhs invested with French authority.

The Kady, whose office, as instituted by the Koran, partakes of the sacerdotal as well as judicial character, has always been chosen by the Arabs from the Tolba, or society of learned men, and both explains and applies the law. The duties of his office are to give judgment upon civil questions relating to person or property, or such infractions of the law as relate to marriages, divorces, successions, the guardianship of orphans, &c. He takes oath of vassalage between the hands of the Procureur-General of Algiers, or the commander of the sub-division. This office is held for life, unless his conduct is such as to render his deprivation necessary.

Below the office of the Kady is that of the *Oukil-bit-el-Mèl;* an officer nominated in each sub-division, by the commander of the division, to watch over certain fiscal interests; to find

out vacant heritages; to collect state duties on succession, &c.; but above all to make research for real and personal property belonging to the late government, that such may be claimed by the present government. In questions on property, decided by the Khalif, the Oukil-bit-el-Mèl is present to watch over the interest of the state. It is his duty to render an account to the officer charged with Arab affairs, and to the administrative commission in his sub-division, of all his operations and conjectures relating to such government-claims: the superior indigenous functionaries are bound to assist him to carry out the duties of his office.

The administrative commissions above referred to were instituted in each subdivision, and in all the towns, by virtue of certain ordinances, published in 1842, by Marshal Bugeaud. Their duty is to watch over government-property, to receive and regulate all tribute, fines, &c. due from the Arabs. The just and regular execution of the duties attached to such commissions must depend very much upon the intelligence, activity, and skill of the "Bureau Arabe." The duties of the head of this office are most important with relation to the colony, as through him must be transacted all affairs of government relative to the indigenous inhabitants. Not only is it

therefore of vital importance that he be well acquainted with the language of the country, and the laws, customs, and characters of the Arabs; but he must be a sagacious and ready diplomatist, shrewd, skilful, determined, and with a heart endued with a sense of unswerving justice; for his duties are of the most laborious, difficult, and extensive character, whilst the race he is brought in contact with are intriguing, sensitive, and fraught with a virulent hate towards that government of which he is the representative. It is a part of his duty to serve as intermediary between the tribes and the administrative commissions in all that relates to the affixing and rendering tribute, imposts, recovery of government property; to regulate the payment of the indigenous troops supplied by the tribes when called upon; to settle questions between the natives and the colonists; to attend the markets, listen to reclamations, settle disputes, and administer justice. He holds, in fact, a most delicate and difficult situation, which it requires the utmost caution in government to fill. If the lot falls upon one worthy of the trust, he may be looked upon as one of the great props of the existence of the colony; for through him a degree of moral ascendency may be gained over the indigenous inhabitants.

CHAP. XVII.

ARAB TRIBUTE.

MAHOMET defined in the Koran certain imposts to be borne by the faithful; or rather, it may be said, certain alms to be paid, devoted to the cause of humanity and the upholding of their faith: for the tithe of the real and personal property of each tribe thus annually collected was to be dedicated to the poor, the wanderer, and the distressed, or to be poured into coffers, to be withdrawn, as occasion might require, for the defence of "the true faith."

The necessities of Abd-el-Kader compelled him, however, to saddle his subjects with tributes of a heavier nature. Thus the tenth of all crops was required by him from each tribe; also a tax upon money, herds, manufactures, merchandize, &c. Heavy fines inflicted upon offending tribes also added to his treasury; besides which he assumed the power of demanding extraordinary tributes in case of need. During his power, indeed, the various taxes imposed by the Emir, and demanded by the

times, pressed so heavily upon his subjects, that many tribes, it is stated, were driven at times to revolt; but by most such burthens were borne with resignation, the demands being made in the name of the Prophet, to defray the costs and to carry on the war against the Infidel. Years of warring against the Infidel, numerous reverses, tribes recreant or become by force of arms tributary to the French, the emigration or annihilation of others, reduced, however, the resources of the brave prince to the lowest ebb.

The French may hope, in course of time, to reimburse themselves in some measure for the vast sums expended in Algeria during the last sixteen years, by also gleaning imposts from those tribes brought into a temporary state of subjection. But every dollar thus extracted from the Arabs may perhaps be regarded with regret, rather than with pleasure, by the colony at large. It diminishes certainly the Arabs' treasury of gold, but contributes to that of abhorrence for their new governors. Every piece thus paid is a sign for revolt; it is paring their very souls: for they feel that they are actually thus contributing to the overthrow of Islamism; that they are profaning the most positive precepts inculcated by the Prophet, by administering to the strength of the Christian.

What must be the feelings of the indigenous authorities under the French, when they are by their office obliged to call upon the members of their tribes for a tax, the profits of which are devoted to such an end? The profits of commerce, the revenue to be derived from duties, &c., would prove probably a far safer mode of reimbursement to the French government. The colonists had better be taxed than the indigenous population, if pacification is desired. The remark, that "the impost enforced by a razzia costs a thousand times more than it produces," is undoubtedly true enough. The chief profits of these razzias are starved sheep, and bulletins. Their effect is well depicted by a French writer: — "There are some tribes of Algeria who have already *three* times received by force of arms a Caïd; who *three* times have paid or promised to pay (*l'épée sur la gorge*) an impost, and who *three* times, by these acts of authority on our part, have lost men, and have been despoiled; have killed many on our side, and have cost us dear. At this time, these very tribes are no longer submitted to France; nevertheless, they have afforded three triumphant bulletins, the last two copied from the first."

The bare hope of *escaping* under the French government, taxes and imposts which they were

liable to under the Emir, might have a highly beneficial effect; especially at the present period, when many of the tribes are reduced to the lowest ebb of misery by the interruption of their commerce, and the expenses and devastations of war. A slight tribute as acknowledgment of vassalage might be required, but floating according to the resources of the tribe, the fruitfulness of the season, &c. Thus it would not be so galling or so liable to excite revolt. Again, as it has been observed, the payment of such tribute might be rendered less loathesome to them if they saw that it was returned to them in some manner, by being laid out in the encouragement of markets, in forming roads, making fountains, *purchasing* those lands held by the Arabs by prescriptive right or title, or otherwise for the increase of *their* well-being as well as of that of the European; instead of leaving them to imagine that it is wholly expended in furthering the means of crushing their religion and their race.

Many Arab families hold their possessions by right of title; and many tribes by immemorial occupation have derived a right to vast tracts of country. Nothing can be more liable to rouse the passions of the subjected or friendly tribes, than the seizure of such lands without remuneration by the French Government in order to

found European settlements thereon. It is little to be doubted that in the end such a proceeding is as injurious to the progress of the colony as in most cases unjust in itself, fomenting rebellion, and thus entailing at the same time loss of life, and ultimately a far greater cost than the purchase of the desired territory would do.

The annual taxes of the Regency of Algiers under the Turks is given by Shaw at 1,647,000 francs. For the year 1822, according to Mr. Shaler, it figured at 2,360,964 francs. The impost gathered from the Arab tribes under the French for the past year (1846) amounts, as may be seen in the preceding chapter, to above 5,000,000 francs, and this squeezed from tribes reduced to great poverty, and suffering by the ravages of war.

PIED À TERRE.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE SORROWS OF A CADI.*

THE following narrative of a journey amongst the Kabaïles of the mountains we have so lately traversed, is both illustrative of the manners and customs of that curious people, and of pleasing simplicity in its details. The hero of this story, which has been published in French, is a cadi under the French authority, who recited it to General Marey, the Governor of Medeah.

"Six years ago," says the Cadi, "a dervise of Mequinez arrived amongst the tribe of the 'Abides,' asking alms from tent to tent, and gaining also some money by making matches. I pitied his poverty, and perceiving, moreover, that he was well acquainted with the sacred writings, I received him into my family, where I employed him in teaching the young boys to read, when my duties as Cadi obliged me to be absent. This very holy man seemed to have completely renounced his wandering mode of life. Not a day passed but that he thanked me

* From the French.

for the benefits I had conferred upon him. I became much attached to him, and, after four years of probation, gave him my daughter, my only child.

"El-Hadj-Ahmet, having a child by my daughter, became indeed a son to me: no longer did I hide anything from him; he knew even the spot where I buried in the earth my money. Now, when I went amongst the 'Beni Douaires' to pass judgment in that affair which has made me incur your displeasure, my son-in-law robbed me of all my treasure, 700 'boudjous,' my pistols mounted with silver, my gun, and my holy books; then mounting upon my mule he fled, quitting my daughter and her infant. I did not become aware of the extent of my misfortune until I returned to my tent: then did I remember that my son-in-law had neither country, parents, nor friends, and all hope was lost to me of ever again discovering him. My grief was so great that I could not remain in my tribe; so I came to Medeah, to the dwelling of a friend. From him I learned that my son-in-law had passed through that town, saying that he went by my orders to Algiers, to make some purchases. Upon this information I decided to pursue the robber. Arrived at Blidah, again had I tidings of him, and was told that he had gone towards the East.

Leaving my horse in the hands of a friend, I then undertook, alone and on foot, my search for El-Hadj-Ahmet.

"Quitting Blidah, I sought him amongst the Khachna. I attended their market at Khemis. Peace and tranquillity reigned there, and some cavaliers of Colonel Daumas were in that country in pursuit of robbers. All spoke of the anxiety with which the Marshal watches over the interests and rights of those tribes. The Khachnas are happy; they have sown much corn, and dream of the profits that will accrue to them from a plentiful harvest. The Khachnas not being able to give me any information regarding my son-in-law, I quitted them to go to the market of the Djema of the Issers. The great news at this market was the expected arrival of the French army. I learnt from the Issers that they were also servants to the French, and that they even awaited them with impatience, in order that they might enjoy that tranquillity which the Marshal rendered to all the tribes submitted to his authority, and that they might at last be relieved from the anxiety that the projected razzias of Ben Salem and the neighbouring Kabailes upon their country and their market, caused them. The Issers are in constant communication with Colonel Daumas, and habitually

frequent the markets of Algiers. For this it is that the Kabaïles so bitterly accuse them.

"Not finding any news of El-Hadj-Ahmet amongst the Issers, I joined the Amavaoua, who had come to the market of the Djema, and I accompanied them to the market of El-Sebt-el-Khodja, being recommended to do so by Oulid-ben-Lanoun. At the market of El-Sebt, I was fortunate enough to encounter Bou-Chareb, ancient Khodja of El-Berkani, and Agah of Cherg, of Titery, my ancient master and lord. Bou-Chareb was rejoiced to see me, and conducted me to Sidi-Ahmet-Taieb-Oulid-Ben-Salem, into whose neighbourhood he has withdrawn, and who also was here at the market. After having demanded the intention of my journey, Ben-Salem questioned me upon what I knew of the French projects. I told him that I had heard it said that in the spring-time they would march forth against the Kabaïles from Algiers, from Medeah, and from Setif: nevertheless Ben-Salem appeared to disbelieve my words. He then demanded of me news of the province of Titery: —how it was governed by the French?—if General Marey had been severe upon the Dirah?—if Ben-Mahieddin was still friendly with the French? He also asked me if I had heard say that the French had made any razzia lately.

"I replied that we lived in peace, our property and religion being respected; that General Marey had seized a great quantity of the grain of the people of the Djebel Dirah, who nevertheless had enough left wherewith to sow their lands; that Ben-Mahieddin had great honours and power conferred on him; and I added that the French had made no razzias for some time. Ben-Salem then said to Bou-Chareb, 'Our friends have deceived us, and that which thy servant tells me indicates clearly that the Sultan has quitted the country; if it were otherwise, the French would be yet in the field, and would make razzias.'

"The market of El-Sebt-et-Khodja resembles a camp more than a market. The approaching arrival of the French occupies every mind. The Kabaïles reproach the Amavaoua, with being, in their hearts, servants of the Christians: they have said to Bel-Cassem-Oulid-Oukassi, their chief, that they are well aware that his brother writes daily to Algiers, where he sells the honour and liberty of his brethren, in the hope of becoming Sultan of the Kabaïles. They endeavoured to persuade the Amavaoua to take refuge in *their* mountains with their families and their riches; but Oulid-Oukassi replied unto them, 'You cannot give us an asylum, and we cannot go with you. For myself alone four hundred

mules would be required to carry my possessions, and my brother would require six hundred more; how could the Amavaoua live in your country? Rather persuade Ben-Salem to abide tranquilly amidst you, and to renounce his project against the Isser market: he will otherwise draw down upon our heads the anger of the French, and then there is no more safety for any of us; they will devastate our plains, and there will remain no corn either for us or for you.' Oulid-Oukassi hides, from fear of the Kabaïles, his intentions of submission; but it is generally believed that he himself, and the greater part of the Amavaoua, will take the part of the French when once the army appears upon his territory. Ben-Salem replied to El-Haoussin-ben-Zamoum (the young man who rules over the Flissa under the guidance of the venerable Amer-Ouel-Hadji), who was charged to bear to him the above words of Oulid-Oukassi: 'I will restrain my cavaliers because of the hospitality that I have received amongst you, and because you desire it; but I will quit your country, for do I not know that you will betray me when the French arrive amongst you?' Ben-Salem resides, it is said, with his family (which is not composed of more than twenty-five horse and one hundred infantry), amongst the Marrabbutts of Sidi-Mohamed-Bel-Cassein;

between the Flissa and the Mateka. Money begins to fail him, and he will soon be obliged to let his cavaliers scour the country to enable them to live. As for the Flissa, I learn that their young chief, El-Haoussin-Ben-Zamoum, is a partizan of the French, but that his tribe are very far from partaking of his opinions.

"Bou-Chareb obtained from Oulid-Oukassi a letter of protection for me during my researches amongst the Beni-Bou-Khatem. I quitted El-Sebt without news of my son-in-law, and entered the territory of the Beni-Bou-Khatem. I waited two days with the Marrabbutts of this tribe—their market-days. The Beni-Bou-Khatem inhabit a difficult country; they are rich in men, in arms, and in ammunition. Proud and jealous of the ancient independence of their country, they are determined to defend it. Though an Arab, and servant to the French, yet did they not regard me with an unfavourable eye; indeed, I have been nourished and aided by all. Not finding my son-in-law amongst the Beni-Bou-Khatem, I left this tribe, and went away towards the East. The country of the Kabaïles is a fearful country to him who ventures into it without a man of that country as a safe-guard. This man, given to the stranger who travels amongst the Kabaïles, bears the title of *anéia*. The honour

of the whole tribe he belongs to is at stake, that this protection, thus confided to the care of the anéia, shall never be violated. The duty of the anéia is to die in defence of the man whom he is charged to protect, and the tribe is looked upon with contempt until all affronts received by him are revenged. Accompanied by the anéia of the Beni-Bou-Khatem, I arrived amongst the Beni-Bou-Youssouf, whom I found, like their neighbours, decided to defend their independence with powder.

"I was at the market of Djema-el-Saaridj, which is at the foot of the country of the Beni-Bou-Youssouf. There I learned that a stranger had recently passed through the land, directing his course towards the East. Upon this news I immediately set out again on my journey. I passed amongst the Beni-Menguelat; and had the opportunity of seeing the whole of their djemâa gathered together. Their preparations for resistance are well arranged: they occupy themselves with the means of provisioning themselves with grain, that they may not suffer from the presence of an army in their country. From the Ouled-Menguelat I proceeded with an anéia of their tribe, to the dwellings of the Marrabbutts of Sidi-Abderahman. These Marrabbutts, men of very great sanctity, are chosen ordinarily by

all the neighbouring tribes, as arbitrators in their intestine divisions. Their judgment is always received by them as the judgment of God, and they most religiously abide by it. I saw amongst them an aged man named Bel-Kharat, who is said to be the most learned of all men in those mountains; he reads and understands all the books.

"I arrived amongst the Marrabbutts of Abderahman, discouraged by my unsuccessful researches, and fatigued by my long journeyings; but having explained to them the object of my travels, they told me that the evening before, there had passed amongst them a taleb coming from Gharb, and going amongst the Tolba-ben-Dreïss.

"My heart was revived with hope, and I departed with an anéia of the Marrabbutts for the country of the Tolba-ben-Dreïss. Upon my arrival there, I heard that a learned stranger coming from Gharb, caused much wonder amongst the Tolba by his narrations of Muley-Abderahman, and of the Christians, and that for two days they were gathered together in their zaouia, and there feasted him.

"Joy arose within my breast, announcing to me that the end of my journeying was nigh at hand. I gave to my anéia a sign by which he might know if this was indeed my son-in-law. El-Hadj-

Ahmet had, in his youth, the end of his nose cut off. The anéia entered into the zaouia, leaving me at the entrance; he saluted the assembly, and by the sign which I had given him, recognized my son-in-law sitting in the midst of the Tolba. Then did he pray the Sheikh to come forth, saying that a stranger whom he had conducted thither wished to hold converse with him. The Sheikh came forth, listened to me, and again entered into the zaouia without replying unto me one word. After having retaken his place, the sheikh demanded of El-Hadj-Ahmet if he had not a father-in-law named El-Hadj-Aly, and who was Cadi of the Abides. My son-in-law was greatly troubled at this question, made to him at so great a distance from his own country, and he bowed down his head without replying.

"Then the Tolba caused me to enter. I kissed their heads*, and they told me to seat myself opposite my son-in-law. My unexpected presence in the midst of these mountains had struck him dumb with astonishment. I related then to the Tolba

* By way of salutation, those of equal age and dignity mutually kiss the head, shoulder, or hand; children and those of nearest kin kiss the head only; inferiors kiss the feet, knees, or garments. Many minutes are also spent in wordy salutations, such as "Peace be unto you!" "May Allah grant you a long life!" &c. "How is your *mare?* and your women?—The blessing of Allah upon them!" &c. &c.

my misfortunes, and my long and perilous journey, at the end of which God had thus conducted me before them, that I might confound the wicked.

" The Tolba praised together the wonderful decrees of the All-High, and reproached in a sublime manner my son-in-law for the blackness of his action. But El-Hadj-Ahmet recovering suddenly from his shame, began fearfully to curse me, saying to the Tolba that I was a Christian; that my presence defiled their zaouia; that I had been the khodja of Colonel Yousouf; that my riches were all impure; and that, fearing to lose his soul by keeping in my company, he had fled from my tent, bearing with him my impiously-acquired riches, in order to bestow them on poor Moslems. But the spirit of God and of justice was with the Tolba, and they beheld only the black crime of one who had abandoned his wife and his child, to rob his father and his benefactor of his possessions.

" Then did the Tolba authorise me to cast myself upon my son-in-law, and to search him; and behold, I found in a leather purse next to his body a sum of two hundred boudjous, the unspent remains of my money. This was restored to me by the Tolba, without my being able to force them to accept any portion of it. They also returned to me my mule, which

had been sold to one of them, but who had not yet paid the price. My gun, my pistols mounted in silver, and my holy books, did they also return unto me. The following day they wished to make us swear to forget what had passed, and read my son-in-law and myself the *feta*, to seal our reconciliation. I requested my son-in-law to return with me to his wife and to his child; but, he fearing in his heart that I would deliver him to the French, I could not persuade him to follow me. I therefore obliged him to repudiate his wife, my daughter, and the Tolba delivered him from his engagements to her.

"I was entreated earnestly by many of the Tolba to sell them my mule; but my feet were sorely wounded, and I was sick; and I prayed them to allow me to keep my beast. My mule excited their envy on account of its lofty stature. They possess indeed but few, the country nourishing them with difficulty, though the Kabaïles make hay as the French do, and moreover habituate their mules to eat dried figs, and even olives, instead of barley.

"I quitted the Tolba full of gratitude and admiration for their lofty virtues, and then I took a westward course in order to regain my country. On arriving amongst the neighbouring tribe to the Tolbas, I was surprized to learn that which

I heard concerning them. I was assured that their number amounts to six or seven hundred, and that all of them know how to read, and moreover fight willingly. Marrabbutts in their mountains, they become dangerous warriors in the field; they are even seekers of quarrel, for they infest the roads and make razzias. The Tolba are indeed as redoubtable amongst their neighbours as warriors, as they are venerated amongst them as wise men. During their expeditions, each of them is armed with a gun, a long sabre, and an iron-headed stick. They make use of either of these arms according to the enemy with whom they are engaged; they slay with blows the inoffensive conductors of caravans, only using their guns and their sabres when encountering armed men who wish to resist them. The Tolba, like most Kabaïles, go with their heads bare, both summer and winter. Oil and figs form nearly the whole of their nourishment: the figs they soak in oil, and thus eat them; the oil they drink. During winter, which is of extreme severity in their mountains, they anoint their bodies with oil; and when the snow falls upon their naked heads, one may see them shake themselves like bulls to cast it off.

"I journeyed on, delighted with all which had happened unto me, but trembling lest I should

encounter any of the bands of the Tolba away from their country. Taking nearly the same road by which I had gone, and always conducted by an anéia, I arrived without misfortune amongst the Issers, then passing through the country of the Khachna to Blidah, I once more arrived amongst the Abides, where my parents and my friends rejoiced greatly at my return. Seated beneath my tent, it was told unto me that thou hadst sent a cavalier to seek me. — One day only did I rest from the fatigues of my journey, and now am I come before thee to hear thy will, and to do that which thou commandest me to do."

CHAP. XVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF M. SUCHET, *VICAIRE-GÉNÉRAL* OF ALGIERS, IN SEARCH OF THE CAMP OF ABD-EL-KADER, IN ORDER TO TREAT WITH HIM UPON AN EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.*

"MANY of our countrymen were still in captivity at Tlemsen, the capital of Abd-el-Kader's dominions; but the number of these unfortunate prisoners was not known to us. The 6th of June, however, we were enabled to learn this; for, by despatches from the expeditionary column commanded by the Governor-General, the taking of Mascara was announced, and the names of fifty-six Frenchmen published as having been found inscribed upon the walls of a fort in that town. At the head of this list, cut by the prisoners themselves, was a cross, beneath which were the following words:—'*Nous ne savons où nous allons . . . . à la garde de Dieu!*' Alas! could our hearts be otherwise than torn by this touching information? Then did I say to Monseigneur (the Bishop of Algiers), 'If you will send me in search of these poor captives, I

* From the French.

will not return without them, even if I am compelled to go as far as Tlemsen, to demand them of Abd-el-Kader himself.'

"The Khalif had promised to render up all our captive countrymen, upon condition that certain of his subjects detained in the prisons of Algiers should be placed in his hands. Monseigneur had already solicited the governor for the liberation of eight Arabs thus reclaimed, and awaited an immediate reply. Certain gifts, also, ordered to be prepared for the Emir, and destined as a ransom for our brothers, were every day expected from France. We received, upon the same day, both these presents and a favourable response, and from that moment my journey was decided upon. That same evening I carried this good news to one of the chief Arab captives, who then lay sick at the 'Hopital du Dey.' He was the *ex-kodja* (secretary) of Ben-Salem. Warmly did he press me to his heart, and his good health seemed to return to him immediately. I bore the order for his immediate deliverance, and led him without delay to the bishop's palace, where he passed the night. I had also gone to the garden where the other Arab captives were at work, to inform them that the following day they would be free, and that I was charged to conduct them to their tribes and

families. They could hardly believe this happy intelligence. By daybreak, however, I was amongst them: and now behold me pursuing my way, with my eight Arabs, my interpreter, and two little Moors, who led the mule charged with the gifts for Abd-el-Kader.

"During the first moment of exultation, my Arabs marched onward well enough—joy gave them strength; but soon their legs, enfeebled by long suffering, refused to support them. By turns, I gave up my horse to the most fatigued, until we met with a military convoy going to Blidah. The officer in command of the detachment allowed them to mount the waggons, and thus we arrived at Douéra, where we halted for two hours. At some few paces from the modest little church of St. Antoine, constructed of planks, I made them sit down beneath the shade of a large tree, to repose themselves, and take their repast. These poor Arabs told me that they found it good to sit near the *Djema-Roumia* (mosque of the Christians).

"An envoy from the Khalif awaited us at Bouffarick. I charged him to bear to the Caïd of the *Hadjoutes* a letter wherein I announced to him my speedy arrival with eight Arabs, lately prisoners. The following day, this chief sent a guide to conduct me to his warlike and redoubted tribe.

"Before passing the French lines, I was desirous of laying in a small stock of remedies for the maladies most common amongst the indigenous inhabitants; for I knew by experience how great a weight this charitable practice has with the Arabs. Moreover, they are persuaded that all Christian priests are skilled in the art of healing. A young doctor, M. Girard, chief of the military hospital at Bouffarick, hastened to furnish my little medicine-chest, giving me at the same time some instructions as to the proper employment of its contents. All these preparatives achieved, I embraced the good curé of Bouffarick, and a quarter of an hour afterwards was in the power of the Arabs.

"Now was our position changed;—my prisoners were free, and I was at their discretion. I remarked with agreeable surprise, on passing a spot where a former exchange of prisoners had been made, that large stones had been heaped up by the Arabs, to perpetuate the memory of that event. A hundred paces farther on, a strong detachment of Hadjoute cavaliers, lying in ambush amongst the high brushwood, rushed forth, coming on full speed to encounter us, their guns presented, their lances at their backs, and their yatagans suspended from their necks. Although I had before seen similar charges, yet

I could not resist a feeling of affright as I thought how absolutely alone I was amongst these fierce and most inveterate enemies of the French. To God I yielded up my life—a sacrifice not accomplished, however, without some regret; but, since that period, no distrust of this kind troubled me during my journey. It was easy to see, by the brusque tone and imperious looks of the most fanatic of the troop, that I was delivered up to their good pleasure; nevertheless did I sustain my character, and, by my confidence, imposed respect. The relations and friends of the prisoners soon arrived, and I witnessed their first embraces after so long a separation. This touching scene recalled to my mind that there were still in the fetters of the Sultan many of my countrymen sighing for the like felicity. The relations of my Arabs had brought for them horses and mules, with some provisions. I accepted some dates, which I ate upon the route. The joyful caravan now sung a national air, a song of deliverance: it was in couplets of dialogue, according to the style of the country.

"The late prisoners soon, however, quitted us, to take the roads leading to their tribes; yet not one departed without offering me his thanks and adieus.

" Left alone with an imposing escort, I arrived about sunset near the Caïd of the Hadjoutes. The tents of this tribe were erected upon the borders of a lake, not far from the *Tombeau de la Chrétienne.*

" The above powerful chief, brother-in-law of the Khalif, is, like most of those who direct the Holy War, a man of about thirty or forty years of age. He awaited my arrival, and gave me a distinguished reception, such as I did not always receive during the remainder of my journey. By his orders, a handsome tent had been prepared for me, with a superb carpet; and a guard of honour watched at my door, his own domestics hastening at the same time to serve me. I passed the night tranquilly beneath this hospitable pavilion, in spite of the noisy chatterings of my escort, which more than once disturbed my sleep.

" Early in the morning, I was upon foot, in order to visit the monument of which I have spoken above, and which tradition has designated by the name of 'The tomb of the Christian woman.' It is situated nigh the borders of the sea, upon a little height, the continuation of that broken district called the Sahel, extending from the Maison-Carrée, near Algiers, to the mountain of *Chénouan*, some leagues from Cher-

chell. Its form is pyramidical: the soil, covering a great portion of its base, would not permit me to take its admeasurement. Upon its sides may be remarked places once coated with marble, which has now disappeared, and upon which there were, doubtless, in former times, some bas-reliefs or inscriptions. The 'Tomb of the Christian Woman' is visible from far out at sea, as well as from all points of the plain of the Metidja, and also from the southern face of the Atlas. I consulted, upon the origin of this monument, with the Hadjoutes, who for many ages have inhabited this district, and amongst whom oral tradition is so faithfully preserved, their historical records being inscribed upon memory alone. They unanimously averred, that this spot, celebrated throughout the country for the prodigies which had there taken place, is held in great veneration by the Arabs. Singular and fearful evils have, say they, fallen upon the heads of those who have attempted to violate or destroy this tomb. Indeed, they assured me, upon the testimony of their ancestors, that she who reposes there was a Christian, and that the Catholics, formerly inhabitants of or pilgrims to this country, pronounced this spot *holy*. There is reason to suppose that this monument may date from that epoch spoken of by Ter-

tullian, when the Faithful were spread over the whole surface of the Roman Empire.

" The Caïd of the Hadjoutes gave me a guide, and I departed for the camp of the Khalif, which lay beyond the first chain of the Atlas, near the Chélif. Hardly had I proceeded a league and a half, when some Arab cavaliers endeavoured to prevail upon me to retrace my steps, saying that I should not be able to reach the Khalif, much less Abd-el-Kader, both one and the other being too much occupied in striving against the advance of our columns to receive me: moreover, they said it was neither agreeable to them, nor safe for me to be allowed to explore their country at a time when two French armies were invading it at the same moment.

" For an instant, I feared that I should not be able to proceed farther. But the thought that fifty-six unhappy prisoners awaited from me their liberty, enduring perhaps unheard-of sufferings, which my mission was destined to terminate; this thought, I say, rendered me insensible to every other consideration. I declared that having letters from my bishop for the Khalif, I could not do otherwise than deliver them myself into his hands; that I wished to see this chief; and that nothing should prevent me from continuing my journey. I consented

only to send my interpreter to the Caïd of the Hadjoutes to ask his approval of my resolution, and, awaiting his return, I sat me down near two isolated tents. The Arabs there came out to hold conversation with me. I distributed medicines amongst some sick women and children; and they brought me, as a token of gratitude, a fine dish of cous-coussou, the best, indeed, that I ate during the course of my journey. A little boy from a neighbouring tribe, who had witnessed my healing operations, ran off to bear the news to his people, and you will see the result.

"After three hours of expectation and anxiety, my interpreter again appeared, and brought a favorable reply. Joyously I remounted my horse, and we now entered the gorges of the Atlas. In a short time, arriving at the tribe of the young Arab of whom I have just spoken, I found that he had aroused them all with his news, and forth they came *en masse* to meet us. The women presented their little sick children to me; the infirm had caused themselves to be brought out upon the route; others had dragged themselves thither as they could, and all cried aloud of me to cure them. But my guide urged me not to lose time, 'for we have,' said he, 'far to go this day; any delay is imprudent.' I was only able to

distribute, as I passed, some medicaments to those nearest at hand; but promised that if again I traversed their tribe, I would remain with them as long as I could be useful. All thanked me, and wished me a happy voyage and a speedy return. This scene took place upon the banks of the *Oued-Ger*, a torrent inclosed in a bed of rocks, and the course of which we pursued a great distance, through ravines as picturesque as wild. Upon leaving these gorges, it was necessary to mount a lofty height, called the mountain of *Bou-Alouan*, which gives its name to the tribes inhabiting it. Before arriving at its summit, we perceived the ruins of the old fort, *Borj-Bou-Alouan;* excepting these ruins neither tent nor douar did we find upon our route; — all had fled at the approach of the French army. The country we were traversing appeared very fertile, judging by the fine fields of barley and wheat with which the slopes of the mountains were clothed.

"At last we arrived, after a ten hours' march, at the commencement of the fine plain of the Chélif. My guide conducted me into a very confined valley, where the Khalif was encamped with his état-major alone. As for his troops, called the 'red cavaliers' or 'regulars,' in order to distinguish them from the other Arabs,

who are undisciplined, they were scattered, to the number of eight or nine hundred, upon the neighbouring heights, to observe the movements of the enemy.

"The Khalif, with whom I had some weeks before treated concerning a former exchange of prisoners, appeared to recognize me with pleasure. He was in his battle-costume, and seated beneath an enormous locust-tree (caroubier), the Arabs not carrying tents when upon a campaign. We conversed together with much freedom. I told him that I came to demand the remainder of our captive countrymen; that I desired to speak to Abd-el-Kader, and to place in his own hands letters from my bishop. He replied that he little knew where the Sultan or the prisoners might be, but that if I felt that I had sufficient courage to go in search of them, he would willingly give me a guide: it would, however, be necessary perhaps for me to push on even as far as Tlemsen, fifteen days' march from the spot I was now at. 'I am prepared for all,' replied I; 'and God helping me, I will not return without my countrymen. If their liberty is refused, I will remain with them.' My determination once known, the chief refrained from arguing against it, and it was agreed that I should depart the following day. Then I recited

my breviary, and we lay down *à la belle étoile*, beneath a clump of oleanders, which protected us in some degree from the violence of the wind.

"By break of day we were again *en route*, without, indeed, knowing exactly whither we were bound. Tak'dempt had been mentioned as the probable retreat of Abd-el-Kader, after the capture of Mascara, and in that direction we turned. I cannot describe to you all that the wild nature of my guide caused me to suffer during this journey. He was a young man of athletic stature and strength, the true type of a Bedouin. Considering neither my necessities, nor my fatigue, nor that of my horse, which died upon the route, he led me on without regard or pity, as if I had been the most robust Arab of the desert. Often he made me journey the whole day, without according me any repose; and this beneath a fiery sky, traversing rocks and precipices or scorching plains. I could not even rest a moment beside a miry stream, or marsh of stagnant water, to allay the thirst which devoured me. When, broken down by fatigue, I was no longer able to follow him, he left me, without thinking about it, far behind him, at the risk of my being assassinated by brigands, who are common enough amongst the Arabs. This fine fellow was, never-

theless, devoted to me; but judging of my powers of endurance by his own, he never dreamed that he would kill me by conducting me in that fashion; and when I complained, he laughed as if it were an excellent joke. There were moments when I was so reduced by heat and fatigue, that willingly would I have laid me down to die. Nevertheless, we did occasionally suspend our march in the middle of the day, though generally we stopped only in the evening, in the douar where we were destined to pass the night. There we would take our sole repast of the day; and what a repast! It was cous-coussou, and always cous-coussou! a species of paste prepared with flower rolled into the form of grains of millet. No bread,—it is unknown to the country; our drink was constantly muddy and brackish water; no fruit, no vegetable. But how could I complain? That offered me by my hosts was of their best. Only living for the most part upon wheat steeped in oil, or a little barley, like their camels, these poor people thought they treated me *en grand seigneur*. Immediately that I dismounted at a douar, the women of the tribe gathered together to prepare for me this extraordinary repast, which often was not served up till eleven or twelve o'clock at night. Awaiting it, a large fire of dried herbs was lighted in the middle of

the camp; and in the glare of this, which took the place of torches, we gave ourselves up to interminable gossiping. The Arabs delight much in recounting or listening to tales; they take also a most lively interest in the affairs of the state. It presented a worthy subject for an artist, all these Bedouins of the douar, young men, aged, and children, crouched around the vast fire, with the priest of a foreign and hostile nation eating and chatting with them until the last brand in the fire was burnt out; and then in the corner of this picture the shadows of the women exerting themselves in every way to serve us, or stretching out their heads to a guarded distance to listen to, or to gaze upon us; the horses, the sheep, &c., lying pell-mell around us; and in the background gurbies, or huts of branches, mingled with black and torn tents. It is not necessary to say, that we lay out every night upon the naked earth.

"My guide was careful enough to manage that we arrived early in the evening at the douar where we intended to pass the night. He did not wish to expose himself by reposing any distance from an inhabited spot, on account of the lions, which are common enough in this country, and of which the Arabs are much afraid. I took advantage of the last glimmer of daylight to doctor

the sick. You should have seen me, an *improvisé* doctor, in the midst of the sick brought from all parts; dressing their wounds, preparing quinine, rubbing afflicted limbs, distributing to each such remedies as I deemed most useful; and for a recompense, blessed by all the afflicted, who quitted me with regret, if not indeed *cured*, at least *consoled*.

"At the commencement of this journey, as we drew nearer the theatre of the war, we encountered every step fugitive tribes whom Abd-el-Kader had forced to migrate with their baggage and flocks, in order to leave but a desert in his rear for the occupation of our army. All these exiles, men, women, and children, saluted me with great respect. The most curious drew near me, and asked me with what view I thus hazarded myself in the midst of their desolated country: and upon my replying that I went to seek our prisoners in the hands of Abd-el-Kader, they would say, 'God grant you a safe journey and full success! As for ourselves,' added they in sadness, 'we fly, we leave behind us our fertile lands, for they say that the French approach.' I pitied these poor fugitives: they seemed, however, resigned, contenting themselves by exclaiming as they raised their eyes to Heaven, 'It is the will of God!'

"Wheresoever I passed, I was, in my twofold character of Frenchman and of priest, an object of curiosity and of veneration. My cassock, my girdle, and above all, the image of Christ which shone forth upon my breast, all indeed, even to my tonsure and the fashion of my hair, attracted the attention of the Arabs, and drew forth a thousand questions. They wished to touch everything, and to know the name and signification it bore amongst us, &c. In truth, they are great children. My watch, especially, was privileged to astonish them; they were wholly lost in conjectures upon the cause of the little noise which escaped from its works, and upon the movement of the hands.

"The chief tribes that I traversed whilst following the course of the Chélif are the *Beni-Ataf*, the *Beni-Skhir*, and the *Ouled-Abbas*. The Beni-Skhir were gathered together in vast numbers at the base of a long hill; they all ran towards me, the Marrabbutts at their head, crying unto me 'Peace, peace!' They understood that I was going to see Abd-el-Kader, and conjured me by their chief, who kissed my hand with a sort of frenzy, to solicit peace, for the war had reduced them to so great misery. The like demonstrations were reiterated by the Ouled-Abbas. It is in the midst of this tribe, the most wealthy and the

most warlike of the country, that the renowned Miloud-ben-Aratch, brother-in-law of the Sultan, and his agha, or minister of war, resides. He received me *en grand seigneur*, causing a superb tent to be prepared for me, furnished with rich carpets and cushions. Like all the Arabs, they appeared to me very tired of the 'Holy War;' I was told, indeed, that they had lately refused to lead their cavalry to Abd-el-Kader. The son of the agha, a fine young man of one-and-twenty years of age, was constantly at our sides, and accompanied us the next day for more than two hours.

"Here and there upon our way we found Kabailes cutting their corn. From whatever distance they perceived us, they ran with sickle in hand and with their large leathern aprons to meet us, and as my guide always preceded me a certain distance, after having inquired of him who and what I was, they saluted me with good humour and respect. At every half-league we perceived douars, for these deserts are more populous than Europeans suppose. It is the fact, indeed, that the greatest part of the hordes wandering at this time in these vast solitudes, are chiefly composed of the ancient inhabitants of those towns which conquest has yielded to the French; for instance, Milianah, Medea, Mascara, and at an

earlier period, Koléa, Blidah, Cherchell. Algiers itself has contributed largely to the number of these exiles: the *Moniteur Algérien* of the 9th of August last reckons for that city alone, two hundred and seven heads of families who were driven to migrate with their wives, their children, and their slaves. It is not astonishing, then, to find this part of Africa so well populated; and I am no longer surprised at the numerous troops that Abd-el-Kader has been able to put under arms. I often held converse with these banished people, who were easily to be distinguished by the fairness of their complexions and the elegance of their costumes. They were generally profoundly sad, regretting their houses, the habits of a town life, their fêtes and other pleasures; feeling more severely than the other Arabs the evils of the war, they yet, like those, bore their sorrows with perfect resignation. 'God has willed it!' said they.

"I remarked in all the tribes which presented themselves upon my passage, very numerous robust youths, and a great number of superb horses; yet, notwithstanding the Holy War is declared, two hostile armies are permitted, almost uninterrupted, to ravage the country. I could not explain to myself this tranquil inactivity.

"Now we quitted the vast plains of the Chélif to take a southern direction towards Tak'dempt,

where we hoped to find Abd-el Kader together with the prisoners, as he was occupied, we were informed, in re-constructing that fortress, which the French had lately destroyed. But upon arriving close to the town, we learned that the Sultan was no longer there, neither could we glean any information regarding the prisoners, nor was it known at all where Abd-el-Kader was gone. Some thought that he was at Tlemsen, his capital, more than fifty leagues from thence; others conjectured that he might have retired to the great desert. This unsatisfactory intelligence, this incertitude, discouraged greatly my guide, and he strongly advised retracing our course. My undertaking had failed if I had receded a single step. I declared with firmness that I had orders to have an interview with the Sultan, that I would go to find him, even if it were to the uttermost parts of the desert; 'And he shall know,' cried I, 'that you would not accompany me.' Intimidated by these words, he replied, 'Let us proceed then at venture; I know not any longer where to lead you.' 'Let us go to Mascara,' said I; 'our troops are in that direction, your master ought not to be far from his enemies.'

"We pursued now the route which the French army had taken in going from Tak'dempt to Mascara; it was easy enough to recognise it by the

traces of the burnings. We noticed on our route very extensive Arab cemeteries, long since abandoned. Without doubt, a nomade tribe formerly dwelled near these tombs. Some ruins, which may with reason be considered those of ancient *Mina*, once an episcopal city, attracted my attention nigh the Oued-Mina. Upon the banks of this river were the tents of a considerable body of Bedouins: we asked of them hospitality for the night, and before quitting them I dressed the wounds of several who had been wounded by the French fifteen days before.

"The following day we traversed Djebel-Ouled-Halonia. At the base of this mountain, which is of considerable elevation and very difficult of access, there is a pretty little town called by the Arabs, *Tsn-Oued-Atch*, and by the French *El-Bordj*. It is watered by a fresh and limpid stream, the only one we had found as yet during our journey, and there I joyfully quenched my thirst. As for the town, it was entirely deserted, the inhabitants having fled, from fear of the French, since the capture of Mascara. It is a part of the tactics of Abd-el-Kader to cause all the population to migrate with their effects and herds from those districts towards which our columns direct their march,—a proceeding very disastrous for our troops, who pursue, at an immense expense and

with indescribable fatigue, an enemy not to be approached. Thus it is that the French upon their entry have found deserted, most of those towns they now occupy; such few prisoners and small amount of booty as are taken are only obtained by some sudden surprize.

"Beyond Djebel-Ouled-Halonía, my guide was at a loss whither to turn; the country stretched out before us was as unknown to him as to myself. For a long time he wandered here and there upon the heights, seeking some tribe. Night came on: we were in the middle of a vast wood; close around us might be heard the roaring of lions, more than sufficient to fill with alarm the heart of my Bedouin. As for myself, I prayed with confidence to that Being never invoked in vain amidst the perils of life; and soon was our courage revived by a distant noise resembling the tumultuous voices of men, women, and children, mingled with the lowings of herds. Directing our steps towards these sounds we found that they proceeded from numerous tribes from the neighbourhood of Mascara united together, and whom our army had driven before it, after having burned their tents and their crops, captured a portion of their flocks, and killed or taken a number of their stragglers. Whilst one of the Arabs recited this in

an impassioned manner, my guide and my interpreter trembled lest, exasperated by their misfortunes, these fugitives should feel disposed to make reprisal, and thus massacre us as being French. But how could we beat a retreat? Already they had recognised us. Forward the horde rushed upon us, with menacing cries: we had only to submit to our fate, or to endeavour to allay the storm. Amidst the confusion and tumult, I demanded to speak with their chiefs. At first they did not comprehend my meaning, or, perhaps, pretended not to do so; nevertheless my black garments, the Christ suspended at my breast, and my calm air of confidence, seemed to strike them. I heard them murmur around me, 'This is a Marrabbutt *roumi*' (Christian priest).

"My guide had hastened to speak to the crowd a few words relative to the intent of my journey: little by little their fury subsided, and presently nothing more was to be remarked upon their countenances than an expression of curiosity and astonishment. Several chiefs now presented themselves to me, and said, 'Welcome, O Christian!'

"A large tent was erected for us close to that of the widows' and orphans'; this was the largest in the whole camp. The women pre-

pared us a good repast, and a most amicable conversation between us and our hosts was carried on until very late.

"Before sunrise we were again upon our horses and directing our way towards the powerful tribe of the Hachems, from which Abd-el-Kader is sprung, whom we thought to find there in the bosom of his family. At every step we encountered cavaliers crossing in all directions: we asked of all where the Sultan might be found, but always the word, *monarfch* (I do not know), disconcerted us. At last, two old white-bearded men accosted us, and in answer to the above question, they replied, 'Look towards those two large poplar trees rising up in the middle of the plain (the Plain of the *Ghris*); we will conduct you to him.' At these words I felt a sudden and universal agitation of mind; but, nevertheless, mingled with a lively satisfaction to find myself at the point of terminating my undertaking. By a spontaneous movement we pressed our horses' flanks and galloped in silence up to Abd-el-Kader's camp. Here and there, numerous groups of Arabs lay upon the ground nigh their coursers, which were browsing upon the scorched herbage.

"We traverse the Oued-Moussa; and now we are arrived. 'The Sultan is there,' said the

deep voice of one of the old cavaliers who accompanied us:—'There, in the middle of that garden of oranges, figs, and oleanders.'—A melancholy silence reigned around us; they spoke in whispers, and by signs only. Some young negroes surrounded us and took our horses: certain Arabs, who appeared to be officers of distinction, presented themselves, and indicated to us by the hand, Abd-el-Kader crouched upon the naked ground beneath the shade of a fig-tree. Taken by surprise at finding myself so suddenly before the Sultan, I requested to retire an instant behind an olive-hedge at hand, in order to arrange myself a little and take out the letters I bore from my bishop. But Abd-el-Kader had already perceived me, and immediately sent his secretary to me, to whom I gave the despatches of which I was the bearer. I said to him that I awaited the orders of his lord to present myself before him. Two minutes afterwards the secretary returned to inform me that the Sultan was ready to receive me. He was at the same spot and in the same attitude in which I had seen him upon my arrival. Without rising, he saluted me with much courtesy, and signed to me to seat myself upon a modest little carpet stretched out at his side.

"The redoubted chief, in whose presence I

now was, was dressed as a simple sheikh; an ordinary haïk, a white burnoose, and a cord of camel-hair passed round his head, formed his whole costume. No arms, neither poignard nor pistols in his belt; no warlike equipage, no sort of court like that which I had remarked about his khalif during the former exchange of prisoners, distinguished this sovereign of the Arabs. He may be about thirty-five years of age, of medium stature; his physiognomy, without being that of a hero, has a certain majesty; his face is oval, his features regular, his beard of a clear deep chesnut; his complexion fair, or rather pale, although slightly bronzed by the sun; his eyes, of a greyish-blue, are fine and very expressive. When silent, he has a pensive and almost timid aspect; but when speaking, the pupils of his eyes are animated by degrees, and soon glisten. At the slightest mention of religion, his eyes fall, and then are raised gravely towards heaven in the manner of one inspired. He is, indeed, simple in his manners, and appeared even embarrassed by his elevated station. I was not a little surprised to behold this austere personage laugh heartily when the conversation took a more familiar turn. If I am not deceived, he possesses a heart awake to friendship with its sweet outpourings.

"The sight of myself also seemed to interest Abd-el-Kader very much: for a long time he had desired to behold a Catholic priest, and I was the first he had ever yet seen. After certain compliments exchanged, he begged of me to cause my interpreter to read to him my bishop's letters: he was delighted with these, and showed the most lively satisfaction. 'I admire,' said he, 'as greatly as you do yourself, the charitable spirit of your bishop. I know all,' added he, with great vivacity, 'I know all that he has done for Algeria, and I hold him in great veneration.'

"I spoke to him of the happiness this prelate had felt in rendering his assistance towards the exchange of prisoners. 'But,' added I, 'this happiness will not be complete until you have given up all your captives. There still remain fifty-six in your hands whom I come to demand on the part of the *Baba-el-Kebir* (the great father, meaning the bishop).' At these words I presented to him the official list of those names which our army had found inscribed upon the walls of Mascara.

"Abd-el-Kader, after an instant's reflection, declared to me that he could not accede to the wishes of my bishop, since we had not rendered up on our part all the Arabs, without exception,

who were still in the power of France. I said in reply, that such were not the conditions of the exchange entered into between the bishop and the khalif; that in engaging to transmit to him the Arabs to whom the French government deemed fit to accord their liberty, the bishop had by no means engaged to loosen the fetters of those who, by crimes amenable to our laws, or for reasons of state, could not be set free.

"I was determined to make him understand that the bishop meddled not at all with politics; that he had only acted in the exchange upon the yearnings of Christian charity which pervaded his heart; that he had done, and still would do, all in his power to obtain the liberty of the Arabs; and, to impress the truth of what I stated, I was happy to announce to him the release of the eight prisoners whom I had just conducted to their tribes, and amongst whom was a chief of importance, especially reclaimed by Ben Salem. All the conditions of the treaty having been faithfully fulfilled on the part of the bishop, it was left to the honour of the Sultan to execute the engagements made by his khalif. —'But will you promise me,' added he, 'that thy master and lord will make further exertions in favour of four Arabs to whom I am much attached, and of a certain chief, who are now in

France amongst the convicts ?'—'As to this last personage, my bishop has already solicited for him the royal pardon; and as for the others, let me assure you, that it will not be the fault of my master if your eyes do not soon behold them.'

"Then did the Sultan, with a grave tone, say unto me:—'Thy prisoners shall be delivered up.'—'When?' said I, anxiously.—'Even this day. I am now going to order one of my sheikhs to conduct them to Oran, from whence they are distant only twelve hours' march.'

"I thanked Abd-el-Kader, I hardly know in what words, and asked him if I might be happy enough to join my compatriots, and return with them by the way of Oran. He said to me, with a smile, that prudence did not admit of this. He, without doubt, feared that, after having traversed so great a portion of his dominions, seen his strength, and appreciated the spirit of the population, I should yield information to the French chief upon this head. Certain, however, am I, that if he had allowed me to return by Oran, I would have promised to have revealed nothing of this, and would have kept my word. But I did not insist, so happy was I that the end of my undertaking was accomplished.

"This important affair arranged, the Sultan said to me, indicating the Christ which he re-

marked shining upon my breast:—'Is this the image of *Sidi-Aissa?*' 'Yes; it is the image of Jesus Christ, our God.'—'Who is this Jesus Christ?'—'He is the Word of God;' and, after a moment's silence, I added,—'and this Word became man to save the world; for our God is the Father both of Moslem and of Christian.'—'What is the mission of the Catholic priesthood?'—'You ought to know, above all as there is a bishop at Algiers,' said I, 'that their mission is to continue here below the ministry of Jesus Christ, to do good unto all men; for we regard all as our brothers, whatever be their religion.'—'Since thy religion is so beautiful, so benevolent, tell me why is it that all the French do not observe it?'—'You shall answer yourself to this: to your eyes Islamism is as excellent—tell me why do not all Moslems observe it?' He raised his eyes and hands to Heaven, and, after an instant of reflection, he requested my leave that he should continue his questions upon Christianity.

"I replied to him, that his doing so would give me infinite pleasure. But immediately my interpreter apologised, and said, that being little versed in the matter upon which we were treating, he found it impossible to make himself understood in his interpretations. Thus

terminated, to my great mortification, our conversation upon religion. I am persuaded that Abd-el-Kader partook of my regrets. Then I caused to be laid before him the gifts which my bishop had sent as a species of ransom for the prisoners. 'I receive them,' said he, 'because thy bishop offers them to me; from any other, I would have refused them.'

"I now entered upon a subject of no less importance. 'My master,' said I, 'asks another favour of you in his letter; I flatter myself that it will be granted. If, hereafter, other Frenchmen, other Catholics, become your prisoners, will he be allowed, as our bishop and pastor, to send a priest to his poor sheep, in order to console and sustain them in their captivity?'— 'He shall be permitted to do so,' said the Emir. —'In authorising this priest to sojourn amongst your subjects, it will be also necessary to permit him to receive such succours as may be forwarded to him from Algiers to administer to the temporal necessities of our brothers; and, moreover, he must be at liberty to correspond with the friends and relations of the prisoners, upon the just and natural condition of showing either to yourself or to whatever chief you may choose to name all letters thus written, and such as may be received; and it is not necessary for me

to say, that such a priest should be permitted to exercise his ministry to its full extent, as if he was in a Catholic country.' He replied most graciously, that he subscribed to all these demands. 'Very well!' said I, 'you will write with your own hand to my master; and, by thus doing, fill his heart with the most lively joy.' 'I will do so.'

"Behold his letter:—

"'From the part of our Lord and Master, Emir of the True Believers, the Sultan Seïd-Had, Abd-el-Kader, whom God protect!

"'To the very sublimé and illustrious amongst the most pious of Christians, Antoine, whom may the All-High ever guide in the way of health and blessings!

"'Salutation!

"'Thy khalif, together with thy interpreter, has arrived near us, and esteeming thee, we have received them in a fitting manner. They have brought us gifts on thy part; we accept them, because they come from thee; it had not been so, had they been offered by another. But thou, thou hast appreciated us; thou hast even well understood us, and we love thee. We pray God urgently to aid thee in all thy undertakings; to guide thee ever in the way of safety.

" ' Thou hast demanded of us, whether it will be deemed fit by us that thou shouldst send one of thy priests unto the French prisoners in case their number should again increase. Willingly do we accept this holy proposal, and we will with pleasure receive him whom thou mayst send, if it please the Most High.

" ' If thou desirest to address unto us any demand, on whatsoever subject, we hereby inform thee, that our khalif Sidi-Mohammed-ben-Allal is qualified to represent us.

" ' We have perfect confidence in thee; we depend upon thy promise to send back unto us speedily Mohammed-Ben-el-Moktar, as well as the others remaining with thee. Their families, their children, await them with the most lively anxiety; they cease not to entreat of God that the moment of their reunion be not deferred.

" ' There are still at Oran four captives; we depend upon their being set at liberty, and that for two excellent reasons;—first, because thou hast promised it; and then, because it will be for thee an opportunity of accomplishing a fresh act of humanity and piety.

" ' Salutation!

" ' Dated, Friday morning, the 29th *rabii tané* of the year 1257.'"

"An instant afterwards, the muezzin called the Moslems to prayer; for they pray as regularly when in the fields, as if in their mosques. The chiefs formed a group apart; the Marrabbutt or *Iman* placed himself in the centre; and the bowings, prostrations, and other ceremonies prescribed by their religion were executed with the most perfect accord, and with profound solemnity. This religious exercise, which they repeat more or less frequently during the day, according to whether it is a feast-day or not, lasts hardly a quarter of an hour. They finished whilst I was still counting my breviary. In order not to disturb me, they kept perfect silence around me until I had also finished: then the secretary of the Sultan, who is himself a Marrabbutt, said to me:—'You pray longer than we do.'—'It is necessary; the duties of a priest are numerous and difficult to fulfil; he should pray much, if he is not lax in his duty.' After some further replies to questions addressed to me concerning Jesus Christ and the Holy Virgin, the solution of which were listened to with the greatest respect, each one returned to his post.

"My interpreter, much fatigued, had just fallen asleep, when the Sultan's secretary returned to me and proposed a promenade: this was in order to conduct me privately to his master. Abd-

el-Kader seemed very glad to see me again: he declared that he had in his heart many things to say to me which it would be desirable to communicate without the assistance of an interpreter. I, in my turn, assured him how happy I should be to inform him myself of all that which my bishop had charged me to express in his name; but that I was not sufficiently acquainted with Arabic to do so without an interpreter. After a little he quitted me, saying, 'We shall see one another again.' His secretary added, that he would send the Sultan's own interpreter at the next interview: 'Then,' said he, 'you can speak more freely to my master; on his part, he wishes to speak with you in all candour. Adieu until to-morrow.'

"In the evening I again had an interview with Abd-el-Kader. He invited me to mount on horseback, and to go with some guides into a pretty valley about a league from the camp, close upon a little river, on the borders of which it was intended that I should pass the night. He himself, with his army, he said, would join me in an hour. Before going, I gathered some leaves from the fig-tree beneath which I had been received by the Sultan; I plucked also a bunch of little flowers as a souvenir of the spot.

"Arrived upon the borders of the *Tsernif*, the

little river referred to, and which gives its name to the valley that it waters, I found there the remains of Roman baths, with other ancient ruins. An hour later, Abd-el-Kader with his troops joined us. What an army! Fifteen or eighteen hundred cavaliers marching crowded together in the greatest disorder; some *chious*, a sort of subaltern officer, directing them by blows of their sticks. The Sultan rode at their head, proudly caracolling upon a superb black horse. He was followed by a cavalier carrying his standard, a sort of little pendant, of deep blue, with a red hand in the centre. The whole of the troops defiled before me, executing a fantasia or evolution; pure ostentation on the part of Abd-el-Kader, I imagine. Frankly speaking, he had nothing to be vain of.

"In the evening, a large ram was brought us for supper. After killing and flaying it before us, the skin was offered to me as a mark of honor; then a large stake was passed through its carcass, and two vigorous Arabs, serving as turnspits, took hold of this by the two ends, and roasted the animal entire over a large fire. Hardly was it scorched, when I was invited to tear off a fragment with my fingers to see if it was cooked sufficiently. I excused myself, however, on the plea of not liking to burn my

hands. After this, one of the Bedouins, wishing without doubt to show his strength and address, took the stake by one end, and, having swung it in the air, sent the sheep rolling at our feet upon the bare ground; which served us as a table, for the Arabs have no other. Then each one tore with his fingers a piece from this singular dish of roast meat, for you know that these tribes never employ either knives or forks. In order not to burn myself too much, I for my part seized the knukcle-bone of a leg, which pulling stoutly I tore from the body; it weighed at least two or three pounds. I fancy that this time I made a good supper; moreover, it was a royal supper. The Sultan added also a little excellent honey.

"Our banquet was terminated by evening prayer, which I performed for myself in the midst of the Moslems, and we lay down to sleep at the same spot, around the fire which had lighted up our dinner.

"The following morning, the day had hardly broken when an Arab came in haste to rouse me; 'To horse! to horse!' cried he wildly; 'behold the Christians!' It was, indeed, the column of General Bugeaud, which, during the night had taken possession of the camp which Abd-el-Kader, inspired by his good or bad genius, had quitted in the evening, and from which we were only

distant one hour's march. When I related this fact afterwards to the General, he exclaimed, with surprise, 'What! was that the camp of Abd-el-Kader close upon our left, when we descended in silence and in darkness to the plain of Ghris, and were those his fires which we beheld? The guides of the column took them to be those of a miserable tribe encamped upon the borders of the *Tsernif*, and said that others which we distinguished in the distance afar off were of the Sultan's camp, which fled before us.' 'If you had been well informed,' said I, 'you might easily have taken Abd-el-Kader and all his troops prisoners; for it is very certain he had no idea that you would attack that night the camp which he had just quitted.' Indeed, the alarm of the Emir was so great, that no sooner had he mounted his horse, than he called me to him, handed me hastily the letters which he had written overnight for my bishop and for his khalif, and told me to depart in all haste. As for himself, he immediately took flight with his cavaliers in the greatest disorder: their retreat resembled, indeed, an actual rout.

"That day we made more than twenty leagues without repose, and I saw no more of Abd-el-Kader. Upon our route we found groups of from eight to ten cavaliers, mostly old men and

youths, whose age rendered them incapable of supporting the fatigues of war. All bestrode half-starved horses, and did not appear animated by any great enthusiasm. I asked more than once whither they were going: 'To furnish our contingent to the Holy War,' they replied, as we rapidly pursued our course in the opposite direction.

"Traversing a vast plain, we found, gathered around numerous wells, a multitude of men and women occupied in drawing up some muddy water. They told us that this was the only water within five leagues of that spot. I asked for some to drink, and found it detestable. Nevertheless, I thought myself happy to obtain even this, for I was dying of thirst. Towards the evening we passed a river, of which I know not the name. It appears, in the time of the Romans, to have irrigated and fertilised the surrounding country by means of divers canals, the traces of which may be easily perceived. We remarked particularly a gigantic dyke which served to throw back the water into the different channels: at present, these channels are almost filled up, and the water of the river, flowing over the dyke, forms a very fine cascade.

"The following night we slept with the Agha Ben-Aratch. It was eleven at night when we

arrived at his tent, overcome with fatigue. The next day we left him, at five in the evening; directing our course towards a tribe at a very considerable distance from thence. As we passed by a douar, a young man ran forth from his gourbie, and, following us, cried out in good French, 'Good morning to you, gentlemen!' I looked fixedly at him, and he coloured up. 'You are not Arab?' said I.—'No,' replied he, 'I am French.'—'What! you are my countryman!' Then I descended from my horse and embraced him. He had deserted in a fit of anger, because his parents had refused him some money which he required. The poor youth wept in relating me his history; but his tears flowed much more abundantly, when, fixing my eyes upon him to read his heart, he saw that I divined his apostasy. 'Oh!' cried he, sobbing, 'you understand what I have done. I have denied my faith. I am Moslem.'—'No, no, my friend, you are no longer so; your repentance is a disavowal of your fault; your tears will obtain pardon of God. You must renounce your error this day to practise publicly your holy religion. I know you can do so; the Arabs will put no obstacle in your way. Let me speak to the sheikh of your tribe.'—'It is in his tent that I live,' said he; 'he treats me as a father, and

will not object to my returning to the Christian faith.' We had a private conference together, after which he made before the assembled Moslems a profession of his faith. I then gave him a medallion of the Virgin, which he attached to his arm, as a sign of his being a Christian. In the eyes of the Arabs it is a mark of protesting against his apostacy; for himself it will be an ever-present souvenir of his fall, and a hint to him to pray for pardon through the mediation of her whom we love to call 'The refuge of sinners.'

"Three successive days we rode on, over hill and vale, without any fresh incidents. At last we saw again the Chelif and its single bridge, which serves as the boundary mark betwixt the provinces of Algiers and Oran. It has been rebuilt lately upon Roman foundations. From Mount Doui, which we climbed on foot, we beheld in the distance, to the west, Mount Zakar, and the city of Milianah, occupied by the French. I seemed now to have entered a more civilised country, and breathed more freely: I was not more than forty leagues from Algiers.

"A douar of the Beni-zeg-zeg afforded us shelter the following night. I found there several women, not long before prisoners, whom my bishop had confided to my care during their

captivity, and who, at the first exchange, were sent back to their tribes. They recognised me and rejoiced at the sight of me. One of them could not contain her joy; she presented to me her two little infant children, and exclaimed to me, 'The Baba-el-Kebir, in obtaining my liberty, saved the life of my two infants. Behold them, they could not have lived without their mother.' She then assembled the whole douar to relate to them again what my master had done for the captives. 'And he,' added she, pointing to me, 'he was with the Baba-el-Kebir, and is his khalif.' Nothing further was necessary to mark me as an object of gratitude to all the mothers present. It was a rivalry who should lay before me flour, oil, and meat, to prepare for me a good repast. A lamb was killed, which one of them cut up with her husband's yataghan; milk was offered me, pancakes, and the inevitable cous-coussou; all this was served up to me at midnight, when I was ready to fall down with sleep and fatigue. These women at first thought that I was a prisoner, and said to me, 'Be tranquil, do not annoy yourself; you took care of us, we will take care of you; you will be here as one of the family.' They viewed my departure with grief, and I bore away, together with their blessings, many prayers that I might soon return

to their wilderness, where I should find all friends.

" At *Mahalla*, the first camp or depôt of the Arab army, we were very well received by the chiefs, who were nearly all illustrious Algerine emigrants. We passed the night amongst them. As the heat was excessive, we could not rest under the tent, and slept in the open air. During our sleep, an enormous hyæna came and smelt us one after the other. At first I did not know what it was, but when I recognised its hideous head bent down over my face, I cried aloud, which put it to flight and awoke my companions. Alarmed at the danger we had just escaped, we re-entered our tents, which we closed with triple cord, at the risk of being suffocated.

" My guide had quitted me to seek the khalif: I had to remit to him some letters from Abd-el-Kader. This officer was also to give me any further commands from the Emir, and to get me conducted as far as the French advanced posts. The following morning our guide returned, but without precise instructions or news. It was only known that Ben-Salem followed the movements of our army, harassing the *arrière-garde*, after the fashion of the Arabs during all our expeditions; but the actual theatre of the war

was not even known. Nevertheless, we departed in the direction of Medeah; following the route which had been taken by our troops, and easily to be traced by the ravages committed by them. It was easy to recognise the spots where they had encamped. Near the Chelif we remarked, about the extinguished bivouack-fires, great quantities of tortoise-shells. It is not to be wondered at that our soldiers had made so great a consumption of these animals, since they are as common in the rivers of this country as frogs in the marshes of France.

"Behold me once more within the gorges of the Atlas, asking of all wayfarers news of the khalif. At last we found him, towards the evening, encamped with his regulars in the beautiful valley of *Marizoura*. He was seated beneath some gigantic poplars, and appeared to us of an anxious expression. Like Abd-el-Kader, he insisted upon the deliverance of the remaining Arab prisoners in our hands; I made him the same reply as I did the Sultan. Upon my request to pass as soon as possible to the French lines, taking the route by the renowned *Teniah-Mouzaïa*, he said I could depart the next day; and that as far as Blidah I should have for a guide the Arab who had accompanied me to Abd-el-Kader. The next day we accordingly

pursued our route, traversing the rocks and precipices of these wild mountains.

"Already were we approaching Medeah, when fearful cries echoed above us; it was a Bedouin sentry upon the heights, who shouted "*Roumi, Roumi djaou*" (the Christians, the Christians are coming)! My guide took fright and fled, ascending an opposite hill, and I followed him without saying a word, for without him where could I go? But behold! by the decree of Providence, we fell in with one of our advanced posts. There was no means of escape; the Moorish *gendarmes* (natives in the French service), who were out as videttes, had already seen us, and announced our presence. My guide was struck with consternation. We stopped to deliberate in what manner we should act. At first I thought it advisable that we should separate, fearing that a charge of grape-shot might be fired at us; then I judged that we had better surrender, it being the only means, in my opinion, of escaping the danger we ran. My Bedouin, however, who feared that he might be shot by our soldiers, refused to listen to this. In vain I sought to re-assure him, by repeating to him that I would be responsible for his life; I could not persuade him. No time was to be lost; for I distinguished several officers with their spy-glasses, observing

our movements. Then did I fasten my handkerchief to the end of a stick, and agitated it in the air, running with all my might towards the French. My signal was quickly understood, and another was given, informing me that I might approach without fear. I was now close upon the advanced sentinel. The general, Baraguy d'Hilliers, who had been advised of my approach, came forth to meet me with his staff; I was an object of curiosity to all. A priest in the middle of the Atlas, coming from the enemies' camp! It was a mystery to them, for they knew nothing of my journey.—'But where do you come from, then?' said the general. 'From Abd-el-Kader,' said I.—'And alone?' 'Alone, General.' He repeated again, 'Alone!' 'Yes, excepting my interpreter.' The astonishment of all the officers was at its height: the soldiers, eager to hear me, formed a dense circle around us. When I had duly replied to a thousand questions concerning those I had just visited, the kind of life I had had amongst the Arabs, and the dangers I had run, I begged the general to send for my poor guide, who was half dead with fear where I had left him. As to my interpreter, he was also surrounded with the curious, and rewarded himself with an ample breakfast, after his fatigues of travel.

"I was hardly to be recognised; my long beard, my face and hands burnt by the sun, my cassock torn from one end to the other, gave me the air of a regular savage,—a complete Bedouin. After a short halt, I said to the general, 'I am your prisoner, but if you will set me at liberty I will again return to the enemy, for with my guide alone, I should reach Blidah more securely than with a French escort.' He easily believed it, and allowed me to depart. A quarter of an hour afterwards I fell in with some Arabs in ambush, who received me with joy and conducted me to a fountain, where I satisfied my thirst and reposed awhile with them. I visited, not far from thence, a cross carved in the rock, above a grotto discovered by the army on its first passage this way. Without doubt it served formerly as a retreat to some holy hermit, in the age when Christianity flourished in this now deserted and unhappy country. At a short distance off are copper mines, long since unworked.

"We now ascended the Teniah Mouzzaïa, so famous for the deeds of arms of our troops. Arrived at the summit, I cut a small branch of olive, as a souvenir of my peaceful passage across a mountain which our soldiers with difficulty scaled at the expense of immense bloodshed. I detached also a piece of bark from an oak beneath

which I was told a young officer had died, a victim to this African war. I prayed for him, and for all our brave soldiers buried upon this field of battle. Willingly would I have planted a cross upon this solitary tomb, had I not feared its desecration at the hands of the Arabs, who in spite of our victories are still lords of this rock. From this summit the view is magnificent. The vast plain of the Metidja, traversed by divers rivers, such as the Oued-el-Kebir, the Oued-Ger, and the Chiffa; then, in the distance, the Sahel, with its little heights bordering the sea-coast from Algiers to Mount Chenouan; and opposite, upon the slopes of the Sahel, Coleah, with its white minarets, may be seen. In the middle of the desert plain, Bouffarik lies like a beautiful oasis; upon the right is Blidah, with its orange-groves and its blockhouses, encircled by its vast ditch; then upon the horizon to the North-east one may perceive indistinctly the 'Fort de l'Empereur' and some country houses, in the vicinity of Algiers; the view at last losing itself upon the waves of the Mediterranean.

"We had now descended into the plain, and approached Blidah. Hardly were we a quarter of a league from that town, and the interpreter had already ridden on to advise General Bedeau, the commandant of the place, of our approach.

Alone with my guide, I proceeded, rejoicing to have reached so nearly the termination of my journey, when suddenly six Arab brigands, armed to the teeth, dashed forth from a deep ravine bordering upon the route, and ranging themselves in order of battle before me, prepared to fire a volley. My guide stood motionless with surprise and fright; as for myself, seeing that I was condemned to die within sight of the French camp, at the instant of having accomplished my undertaking prosperously so far, I recommended myself again to the Virgin, the guardian of Christians, and advancing hardily towards the chief of the band cried out, 'God defend you from an evil deed: rather may He pour forth His blessing upon you!' At these words they looked upon me with an astonished air, lowered their arms, and dashed off. A few minutes afterwards I was in the church at Blidah, returning thanks to God for the happy issue of my singular mission. And the following week I embraced at Algiers the Captain Morissot, who had just arrived from his captivity, together with his companions."

CHAP. XIX.

EXTRACTS FROM THE AUTHOR'S JOURNAL, ON A RIDE THROUGH THE PROVINCE OF CONSTANTINE TO THE OASIS OF BISKRA.

Constantine, October, 1846.—At last I have arrived at the vast table-rock occupied in days of yore by that most ancient city, the royal *Cirta*. A classical imagination may doubtless picture me as having approached this venerable site of the capital of Numidia in its palmy days with feelings of great veneration, with visions of Syphax, Sophonisba, and other mountain-heroes and heroines of their day, floating in my brain. Egregious error! Historical reminiscences are delightful enough when basking in the sun upon the house-top, or when reclining upon a sumptuous divan, inhaling from the jasmine chibouk the perfumed weed of Latikia. Such, however, was not my condition; such were not my visions, as my horse's hoofs spurned the rocky road leading up to Constantine. Au contraire, the ultima thule of my desires was to find shelter within her gates, and the most vivid of my visions bore a very gastronomic character.

Twenty-four hours' fasting on dirty water and

a handful of dried dates, with eighteen hours' exposure to torrents poured forth from the very flood-gates of heaven, must be my apology.

Before speaking of Constantine, I must record a slight sketch of my arrival and doings at Bône, the *City of Jujebs* of the Arabs: and then touch upon the "tot discrimina rerum" of my gallop from thence to Guelma. As for the hundred and ten leagues of sea dividing "Algiers the warlike" from the "City of Jujebs," little is to be said: yet Bougie (the *Saldæ* of the ancients), situated at about forty-five leagues to the east of Algiers, is worthy of a passing souvenir. Historical associations, as well as the romantic position of that town, perched upon the rocks at the foot of Mount Gouraya, the base of which is laved by the waters of the noble bay, renders it interesting to the wanderer. A certain M. Prieur, "payeur de l'armée Française," discovered here some time ago an inscription putting an end, it is said, to all doubts as to the Carthaginian origin of this city. In the "Bibliothèque Royale" at Paris it may now be seen.

From the fifth century to the taking of Carthage, Bougie was the seat of the Vandal kings; since which, Romans, Saracens, Moslems, pirates, and Spaniards have struggled for and held it. Charles V. fortified it in 1541, when on his way

home, writhing beneath the chastisement inflicted upon him by the Algerines. The paw of the British lion left ugly traces upon it, when in 1671 Sir Edward Spragg furiously battered it; and now the French have taken and garrisoned it. That, indeed, is all they can boast of at present, and little benefit will they derive from it until by force of arms or art they can prevail upon the fierce highlanders, by whom they are encircled, to allay the bitter feelings of hostility with which they regard the invading Christian. As for any colonist who may be tempted by visions of hecatomboian cattle reared upon the fertile shores of the river Bou-Messaoud, his lot will be but an unhappy one in the present state of affairs at this point; for Bougie is, in fact, a mere military post, the very sentinels upon the walls being ever and anon hailed by the whistle of a Kabyle bullet. A certain Cherif Mohammed, who has annoyed the French considerably from time to time, lives at present in the neighbourhood, encouraging the spirit of revolt, but from the checks he has lately received, he is now compelled to content himself by sending out occasional marauding parties; keeping up a kind of guerilla warfare, which holds in a state of harass and alarm both the garrison of the town and the few allied Arabs in the neigh-

bourhood. A night or two before my arrival at Bougie, a band of this mountain-chief's foragers were outwitted by an ambuscade of indigenous cavaliers in the French service, and sadly mauled. In fact, there is a continual sparring going on between these sturdy sons of the "Mons Ferratus" and the present tenants of Bougie. No sooner are the French flocks, or those of the allied Arabs, led forth to revel in the fat pastures of the Oued-Messaoud, than hungry eyes gloat upon them from the thicket-clad heights around, and a sudden swoop carries off shepherds and sheep. If, on the other hand, the hostile mountaineers are tempted to descend with their own herds, the same fate awaits them; so that a system of aggression and retaliation keeps both parties in a delightful state of *qui vive.*

The population of this frontier town of the Kabylie, which figured before the French occupation, in 1833, at several thousands, is now diminished to about 500 Europeans and a very few natives, and is almost wholly composed of vendors of such necessaries of life as are required by the garrison, by which they are attracted, and from which they gain their subsistence. Thus, in point of population, Bougie ranks third with regard to the other points occupied by the

French on the coast east of Algiers; Bône and Phillippeville containing a superior population, and Djidjeli, Dellys, and La Calle, an inferior.

Besides several Spanish constructions, the traces of an ancient enceinte of Bougie still exist, together with some square flanking towers of solid masonry. The modern town is supposed to occupy about a third of the Roman site. The bay, though a noble sheet of water, yet presents but one really safe roadstead, that of "Sidi Yaya."

The night-wind blew cold from the snow-clad heights of the Djurjura, —

> "The moon was now
> Rising, full-orbed, but broken by a cloud," —

as, bidding adieu to Bougie, onward we glided, cleaving the glistening waters of the gulf. Gigantic rocks, jutting forth from the rugged shores, increased in grandeur as the shadows of darkness fell upon them. Here and there, amid the wild recesses of the mountain heights, the glimmering of Kabyle watchfires might be seen. Then, as we turned Cape Cavallo, a new scene burst upon us. A vast tract of mountain-side presented one glowing sheet of flame. Towering heights were clothed with fire: chased by the reflection, the silver rays of the pale moon no longer danced

upon the rippling surface around us. Thus does the Kabyle clear a space upon his brushwood-clad mountains, that he may cast in his grain, the sowing season being at hand.

En passant, I hear rumours of an expedition into the Kabylie next spring. If such takes place, and my bones do not bleach upon the mountains of Constantine, I trust Marshal Bugeaud will allow me to join it, being very ambitious to penetrate the fastnesses held by these offspring of Canaan, or Genseric, (or whoever may have been their ancestor), who, sheltered by the sternness of their home and character, have from time immemorial spurned the yoke, and held at bay that subjection and those imposts, which their neighbours of the plain have been so often compelled to endure. Why the French eagle is ambitious to soar upon the towering heights of the Djurjura, disturbing the industrious and retired habits of her tenants, I cannot say. The Romans found them a "genus insuperabile bello:" modern tactics may, in the end, prove them less so; but the lesson will cost, in all probability, a considerable flow of blood and treasure, for no great purpose. Rome found the most sure way of holding sway over her African dominions, not that of following up the system of destruction, but that of parading the wonders

of art, enforcing the study of her language, encouraging agriculture, and keeping the sword aside as much as possible. It was thus she laid her most solid foundation for the cities which graced her African principality, for her noble routes stretching from the Lybian desert to the columns of Hercules.

"On peut être héros, sans ravager la terre."

Surely the French might take a hint there, and save themselves much blood and gold. The sword cannot be altogether laid aside at so early a period of occupation; but the public may be amused with a superfluity of triumphant despatches detailing thousands and tens of thousands of captured cows, without bringing this hive of mountain-bees about their ears, and destroying their honey for no earthly purpose.

After touching at Djidjely, where the French occupants are annually decimated by the malaria, and at Phillipeville, we turned Ras-el-Hamrah, or Cap Rouge, or Cap de Garde of the moderns (the *Hippi-Promontarium* of the ancients), about 5 p.m. on the third day of our voyage, and soon afterwards dropped anchor in the Bay of Bône. Seven knots an hour was the greatest speed with a fair wind that the "Tænare" (or *Traîneur*, as it was observed on

board she should have been named) accomplished during this run. I was deeply indebted to ignorance of the rules on board for having fared sumptuously upon the voyage. Being the only *bourgeois* on board and not cognizant of the regulations for the supply of food on deck to the passengers, I descended into the cabin and dined with the état-major every day.

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise:"

not that mine was wilful ignorance; but I certainly escaped "eating much dirt" by being ignorant in this case; and the officers were either too courteous to inform me of my mistake, or else supposed me to be an invited guest.

I like Bône. Its wood-clad heights overlooking the wide blue sea, its rich plains watered by the Seybouse, the Boo-jeemah, and the Ruisseau d'Or, please me. So do also its gardens, in the fertile soil of which luxuriate flowers and vegetables of all sorts, skilfully irrigated by that most industrious class of colonists, the refuse of Spain and Malta, who, never idle, cultivate the land by day, and rob and cut throats by night. Again, how interesting are the moss-clad ruins of the ancient Hippona, shadowed by groves of olive, jujeb, and karoubie! The wind sighs through those now deserted courts from

which the venerable St. Augustine so nobly combatted the ruinous march of Roman luxury, and those various heresies which then tore the Christian church in Africa. And was it not within those walls that, borne down by the evils which assailed the Empire and the Church, he died,—Vandal shouts rending his ears, as in fierce pursuit they chased the flying forces of the unhappy Boniface, and filled the courts of Hippona with their Arian hordes?

My first act upon landing at Bône was to purchase a steed; and for three hundred and fifty francs I obtained a very respectable one, though an ancient Numidian would doubtless have spurned it. The glory, indeed, of the Numidian horse is, I fear, much faded: the race is sadly degenerated, and naturally becoming more so every day; for the Arab knows that if he breeds a fine horse, he will be obliged to part with it for the French service at about a third of its value, or perhaps for nothing at all. This is what injured the race so much during the Turkish dominion. The horses brought to the Arab market whilst I was at Bône were neither numerous nor of superior quality. In the neighbourhood of Constantine may, however, be found some very superior horses, and the price demanded is far lower than it would be for the

same cattle at Algiers. The best race at present in Algeria are bred in the neighbourhood of Setif, three days to the west of this city.

My intention was to have left Bône for Guelma on the 17th, but upon rising that morning, I beheld the sky like a sheet of red-hot copper, and the atmosphere fraught with desert-sands whirled from the south by a furious sirocco, breathing fiery blasts; so I was compelled to lay aside my ambulatory intentions for that day. General Gerard, the commandant at Bône, to whom Mr. St. John had courteously given me an introduction before leaving Algiers, was also kind enough to supply me with letters to different officers in command on the route, as well as to General Bedeau, the Governor of Constantine; to whom I likewise bore letters from Paris.

On the 19th, the sirocco having subsided, I found myself about 4 a. m. at the gate called the Porte de Constantine, contemplating the stars, with my gun on my back, and my pistols in their holsters, impatiently expecting the lazy spahi assigned to me as an escort; for though enveloped from head to foot in a thick burnoose, the morning air proved cold and damp. About 6 o'clock my spahi appeared; and two or three hours later, we galloped up to the camp at Drean,

the first military post on the road, having traversed an open, naked country, but very well adapted for the growth of corn.

There is an ancient Roman bridge over the Bou-jeemah, or a branch of that river, about two hours from Bône, on this route. As for Drean, it is a mere collection of barracks, formed of planks, with an earthen rampart and a slight fosse surrounding it, situated upon a naked mamelon, and sheltering at this time a troop of spahis. Obtaining a fresh spahi here, I soon reached the second military post, "Neck-maya," consisting of a stone building and some huts of plank, serving as stables, canteen, &c.

About an hour from hence, observing an Arab douar in a little valley on the left of the route, visions of cous-coussou tempted me to direct my steps thither, having tasted nothing that day. Our arrival was hailed, as usual, by open-mouthed dogs, guardians of about a dozen tents, "black as the tents of Kedar," but by no means "comely." At the door of one of these sat an ancient Bedouin, of villainous aspect, teaching his little naked offspring how to fashion a club from the root of a lentisk-tree. Dismounting, we seated ourselves upon a matting beside him; but I had neglected to pull my boots off, and the old gentleman commenced virulently cursing my parents,

out of respect to whom I was on the point of spitting on the patriarch's carpet and departing in wrath: but nature rebelled—hunger outbalanced the respect due to my progenitors! Telling my spahi, therefore, to preach hospitality to him, and to tell him I was an *Inglese*, our worthy host became more amiable, and demanded from me a prescription to cure his eyes, which were inflamed from old age and rare ablutions. Now, "feeding fat the grudge I owed him," I told him, "thrice a day, the sun being at certain points in the heavens, to dip his venerable head in the waters of a neighbouring stream, and after each dipping, to walk backwards to his tent without looking behind him." This he promised faithfully to observe; and if he has done so without breaking his inhospitable old skull over the huge stones scattered between his tent and the stream, the ablutions may have proved effectual. A bowl of water was now brought to wash our hands in, before plunging them into the cous-coussou, which soon appeared in its wooden vase. A quantity of warm water and rancid grease being poured over it, we, with a joyful *bismilla*, (in the name of God,) did full honour to it, in spite of being half choked with the superfluity of goats' hairs mingled with it.

Soon after leaving Neckmaya, we traversed a

district covered with brushwood; wild hills and massive isolated rocks varying the scenery. Until arriving at this point, the route from Bône is good enough; but here, in the winter season, all traffic is often stopped by the swollen streams. We soon arrived at a fountain clear as crystal, the waters of which are both warm and mineral. That they were not neglected by the ancient holders of Numidia, is betokened by considerable remains of Roman brickwork; for they had baths here, and it is now called by the Arabs Hammâm-Berda. Oleanders and other shrubs luxuriate upon the margin of this ancient spring, and overshadow the bright stream, which rushes from it in noisy cascades. Numerous mocking-birds find covert amidst their branches, and fill the air with their wild but sweet notes. There is fine pasture-ground around Hammâm-Berda; for it is not alone irrigated by the waters issuing from that ancient bath, but also by another stream, the waters of which, rapid and plentiful, turn in their course a mill erected near the route by some French speculator. Further down, before falling into the Seybouse, the channel of this stream, breaking into numerous branches, refreshes many an Arab bed of water-melons, and more than one garden of the French colonist. Over the ford of the Seybouse, at which we now

arrived, a wooden bridge has lately been erected; for in winter this river swells its waters, and many lives were formerly lost in traversing it.

Guelma (the *Calama* of the ancients) is situated on the south-eastern shore of the Seybouse, about a quarter of a mile above the bridge, and on the slope of a hill of gentle inclination. As slowly the traveller wends his way up the winding route leading to this French post, and beholds strewed around vast blocks of fine stone skilfully squared by the Roman chisel, mingled with fragments of marble columns, he can but meditate upon the instability of human power, and how the might of nations is entombed by time. Draw back the veil of ages, and the double-peaked summit of the wooded "Maouna" overlooks a noble city, her towers, her temples, and her palaces, radiant with Parian marble. Forty thousand inhabitants within her walls bow to learning, art, and luxury; beyond her gates extends a richly-cultivated plain, its teeming slopes watered by the winding "Armua," which, leaving its tribute here, then hastens on its rapid course to refresh the delightful gardens of the royal Hippona; ships freighted with oriental luxuries, borne upon its bosom, before it mingles its waters with the "Great Sea!" "Tempora mutantur."—"The mare's saddle," as the Arabs

name Mount Maouna, which forms the background of Guelma, now overlooks some few score French houses, garrisoned by about eight hundred men, consisting chiefly of Spahis and the Légion Étrangère.

Numerous medals, both Numidian and Roman, have been discovered amongst the débris of this ancient city; the former of lead, and stamped with the Numidian horse. I am told that an interesting souvenir of Christian Africa also came to light some years ago: this was a huge cross in metal, dug up within the precincts of ancient Calama. En passant, this was by no means an orthodox city, if I recollect right, but a hotbed of polytheists and schismatics, inciting often the bitter rebukes of Father Augustin.

Antiquaries say they trace here the remains of a Christian church. There are, indeed, numerous pillars of fine marble strewed here and there and everywhere, but whether they sustained roofs dedicated to the shelter of Christians or Pagans, others may determine. All the most interesting Roman inscriptions have been carried off by the aforementioned harpies to Paris, together with others in unknown characters, probably ancient Numidian, cut perhaps when Calama was (if it ever was) a "treasure city" of the hero Jugurtha. It is stated to have been

here that the Proprætor Aulus Posthumius, with his numerous host, was so sorely beaten some two thousand years ago, when, instead of decamping, as he had intended, with the rich coffers of the Numidian chief, he was compelled with his troops to march beneath the yoke, and to quit Numidia in a very summary manner: a Roman preferring, for once in a way, shame to death! Now Sallust says it was at *Suthul*, and M. Dureau de la Malle affirms Suthul and Calama to be synonymous: but if Guelma is Calama, and Calama was Suthul, Sallust's descriptive powers were not very great, for that notable historian places Suthul on the summit of a precipitous mountain, with a marshy plain below, forbidding approach. Now Guelma can never be said to be upon a precipitous mountain, though it lies upon a declivity; neither can the surrounding district ever have presented a marshy plain, on account of its inclination, which would naturally carry off the rains of heaven into the Seybouse.

The present amount of the civil population of Guelma was stated to me, but I forget it. There is, however, one street of considerable length; the houses built chiefly of massive Roman remains turned up upon the spot, and therefore not quite so likely to be tumbled down by the first slight earthquake or remarkable

rains, as most of the pasteboard settlements of the colony. Building was actively going on whilst I was there, notwithstanding that the financial crisis under which the whole colony is at present suffering has extended here in full force, money commanding from twenty to even thirty per cent.

The original plan drawn for this French post is based on a population of seven thousand souls; in 1842 there were ninety-two inhabitants, in 1843 one hundred and eight, and at the close of 1844 three hundred and seventeen.

There is one French regulation much to be admired, viz. the system of allotting gardens to their soldiers. At Guelma there is a fine piece of ground cultivated by them, and there those at all industriously inclined spend their leisure hours. If the same system could be adopted with us, it might preserve many a brave fellow's skull from many an awkward crack gained in idle broils, for lack of better amusement.

There is also a "pépinière" at Guelma to supply the colonists with seeds, trees, and other vegetable products; it was shown me with much boasting of its beauty and promise. Rank weeds luxuriated there certainly, but little else; its fertility is indisputably very great, doing credit to nature, but none to the gardener.

The circle of Guelma, as far as I have visited it, is, I should say (barring its distance from a seaport, viz. sixteen leagues, and that not to be traversed by merchandise in the rainy season), a promising point of colonisation; for its plains and its vallies are rich, and watered by numerous streams. The chief of these are, the Seybouse, the Oued Scherf, the Oued Bou-Hamden, and the Oued Zenati. Tobacco, mulberries, and corn would doubtless flourish here; and it is said cotton and indigo have succeeded in the pépinière, which one would hardly expect at so great an elevation.

There is very little land yet brought under cultivation in the neighbourhood of the town, but the soil is good, and to the West of the town is a delightful little valley with a fine stream, where there are gardens sufficiently extensive to supply vegetables to the owners. The climate is much the same as that of Constantine, though not quite so cold in winter. Dysentery and intermittent fevers are the prevailing diseases, but it is "all in all" a healthy position.

Guelma is rather a desirable spot for the sportsman; hares, red-legged partridges, quails, and at the present moment the little "African quail," remarkable for having only three toes, abound there. As for lions, the "lion-king" (as

the Arabs call the renowned spahi, *Gerard*) has made them rather shy of the neighbourhood. He is incorrectly reported to have been decorated for his courageous feats in lion-slaying. No less incorrect was the late report of his death. It is a curious fact enough that he owes his life, however, to a lion, and thus it was. He was one of the unfortunate battalion which a short time back, leaving Guelma for Tebessa, a late French post on the confines of Tunis, were deceived by the apparent friendship of an Arab sheikh, and fell a prey to Numidian treachery, every father's son of them being most barbarously massacred, with the exception of our hero. Now the spirit of that "mighty hunter," who aforetimes swept the borders of the Euphrates as Gerard now sweepeth the borders of the Seybouse, watcheth with a guardian eye his worthy successors in the art of venery now on earth, as every orthodox chasseur is fully aware. A lordly lion then, sent forth by the Babylonian Nimrod, crossing the route of the doomed battalion a short time before its falling into the hands of the Philistines, was fired at and grievously wounded by our Nimrod of the 19th century, who, dismounting, swore by his beard that he would have the skin of the noble beast. Forthwith plunging into the thicket,

he followed his prey all that day, spent the night "sub jove frigido," and, as the dawn appeared, again followed up the track, with that extraordinary perseverance for which he is so renowned, and came upon and slew the bleeding monarch of the forest. The excitement of the chase over, our hero then turned to regain the route of his battalion; but sunset followed sunset, and he was still a wanderer in a wild and trackless country. During these wanderings, the fate of his companions in arms was sealed. The grievous tidings had reached, not only Guelma, but Algiers, and the lion king was mourned as dead, both by Moslem and Christian. But, lo! one fine morning the defunct hunter tranquilly marched into the little auberge he resorts to at Guelma, and throwing down a trophy of his prowess, in the shape of a lion's skin, demanded his breakfast from the doubting landlord, who, though no admirer of ghostly customers, still put food before his guest, trusting to the devil for the reckoning. The rapacity of his doubtful client, however, soon removed the scales from the eyes of our worthy host, and he perceived with joy that it was indeed Master Gerard in the body.

As I sat upon a bucket turned upside down, dreaming of "moving accidents by flood and

field," innumerable anecdotes of Gerard's deeds were poured into my ears by the worthy son of the city of Lyons, proprietor of the above-mentioned miserable auberge. I suspect, indeed, a good many of them had become "all the better for keeping," when retailed to me.

One object I had in visiting Guelma was, if possible, to join Gerard upon one of his hunting excursions; but I found that he had disappeared for the last three weeks, having been called upon by a distant tribe to slay a lion in the habit of ravaging their flocks. Even hostile tribes often apply to him for such purposes; and so great is the license he has gained by his exploits, that his superior officers allow him to absent himself without reserve, when thus cited to the chase. The darkest nights are those chosen by him for his sport, the glare of the lion's eyes then offering the most sure mark.

I stopped three days at Guelma, during one of which I walked with my gun a considerable distance up the banks of the Seybouse, to the West of the city, where they become wild and craggy. The Arabs of this neighbourhood struck me as far superior in aspect and manners to those of the province of Algiers: indeed, many are very handsome, with fine oval countenances, large black eyes, small aquiline noses,

and snowy teeth. The women wear huge silver rings in their ears, of great weight, and as large as anklets; besides numerous other ornaments, such as little looking-glasses, and especially a wooden hand attached to the breast, the fingers representing the number *5*, to which they suppose an especial virtue belongs. Coming upon a solitary Arab tent during our rambles, we demanded hospitality. A remarkably fine and intelligent-looking Arab sat at the tent-door, wrapped in meditation, from which when we had aroused him, he told us he was a thaleb, leaving us to infer that thalebs do not eat. So, leaving him to chew the cud of learning, we directed our course to a douar at some distance, where, after being duly greeted by the dogs, we encountered an Arab, the most hideous and deformed of his species that I had yet fallen in with; for, not alone was he afflicted with elephantiasis, but the whole of one side of his face was drawn with horrible convulsions. Indeed, the poor Arab inherits disease as he inherits his father's filthy haïk. And how fearful must at times be their sufferings, as they are either totally devoid of medical aid, or victims to ignorance, scalding oil, and hot irons! The proposed crossing of the European and the Arab blood, it is pronounced by a certain modern Hippocrates, will

produce a race "une des plus belle de l'univers." I should recommend them first to establish medical institutions to purify the blood of the present degenerate Arab, before propagating the above hybrids; otherwise foul diseases, happily rare with the European, but ravaging the Arab tribes from the cradle to the tomb, will be introduced,—"a consummation not devoutly to be wished."

After being regaled at this douar with dates and cous-coussou garnished with hard eggs, we returned thanks and francs, and pursued our walk. Passing through some brushwood on the banks of the Seybouse, our dogs running into a thicket, quickly ran out again, with yells and howls; one of them denoting, by his head streaming with blood, that the thicket possessed a tenant who viewed the intrusion into his domicile with decided disapprobation. My companion now looking in on the other side, groaned forth that he perceived the eyes of "*un tigre énorme.*" Upon this, I hurled stones into the thicket; hailed the "tigre énorme," as the son of a Jew, &c., &c., in the Arab fashion, to excite him to come forth; and at last, finding his tenacity to his home very great, I proceeded to set fire to the thicket. No sooner, however, did he perceive this, than with a sudden bound he effected his

exit; and a remarkably handsome fellow he was, of the leopard species. Swinging his long tail in contempt of a brace of bullets in his rear, he dashed down, with the greatest agility, an almost perpendicular cliff, and disappeared in a thick jungle.

My brother-sportsman this day was a Maltese, whose acquaintance I made by hazard. On entering the auberge one evening, the landlord informed me that an Englishman, settled at Guelma, had heard of the arrival of his countryman, and would like much to see me. The following morning I sought him out, and found him busy in his shop, which seemed to contain everything, from bread, bad rum, and other liqueurs, down to tallow candles and soap. As for English, which he professed to be his mother tongue, he spoke it so badly, that we were obliged to return to French again, and in spite of his denial, I concluded him to be of Maltese origin. His ignorance of his pedigree amused me. As for his father, he knew nothing about him, but he believed his mother was an Italian. He proved, however, a fine merry-hearted fellow, said he was getting wealthy, and spent half an hour parading to me the riches of his cellar, tapping barrel after barrel to prove to me the virtue of their contents. Full of anecdote, and

well acquainted with the country, he made a good sporting companion. Talking of lions, he said that a few years back, as he was once riding with a Frenchman from Bône to Guelma, a disagreeable companion in the shape of a lion joined them, leisurely trotting along parallel with their route, at about fifty yards distance. The Frenchman, panic-struck, spurred his horse and disappeared full speed, declining, to stop and accept the loan of one of his fellow-traveller's pistols. Onward plodded my new acquaintance, ever and anon glancing slyly at the lion, which still kept at the same distance, seeming evidently bent on accompanying him to Guelma. Arrived at the banks of the Seybouse, the waters of which were low, the Maltese, anxious to part company, rode sagaciously into the mid-stream, and took his course down the bed of the river. The lion coming to the bank of the river, halted a minute, then trotted along the riverside, still affectionately regarding the horseman, until, arrived near an Arab douar, he made a full stop, and with an angry snarl of disappointment bounded off in another direction.

The following day I left Guelma for Constantine, with two spahis as an escort, and arrived in the evening upon the borders of a wide plain, called Beni-Simsen. Here we found the *Zenatia*,

a powerful tribe who drink of the waters of the Oued Zenati. For the caïd of this tribe I had a letter. It was the hour when the flocks and herds were wending their way to the douar, there to seek, within the circle of tents, shelter during the night season from wild beasts and from robbers. The caïd, with the elders of the tribe, were sitting in a ring upon the ground, withdrawn a slight space from the douar, holding council. Immediately upon our approach he arose, and preceding us to the douar, after the usual salute of *Salăam alekum* (Peace be unto you)! showed us into a good tent spread with matting. A little carpet in the centre, as the seat of honour, was assigned to me. A sheep was then driven before me and slain. Four of his bones graced an enormous dish of cous-coussou, which was brought in about midnight. The mutton being rather tough, my spahis kindly tore off the most fat and delicate morsels with their fingers, and stuffed them into my mouth.

This douar consisted of above nine hundred tents, and the caïd said that he could at any time lead forth two thousand cavaliers equipped for battle. The chief soon retired; but what with the noisy conference kept up by my spahis and the Arabs, and the rushing forth every five minutes of the dogs, to chase away howling

hyenas and troops of jackalls hovering around, I lay on my back with my head on my saddle with very little effect until three o'clock of the ensuing morning. Mounting in the dark, and during a pelting rain, we forded the Oued Zenati, and pursued our course across the vast and naked plains of the Beni Simsen. In the act of crossing the Oued Zenati my saddle turned round, and I found myself on my head in the mid-stream, with one of my feet hanging in the stirrup. I released myself, but my steed galloped off in the dark, and trouble enough we had to capture him again. A good ducking, and my gun-barrels full of water, was the fruit of this unexpected evolution.

Day had long appeared; but still were we upon this eternal plain, and still the rain fell in torrents. At last we arrived at the base of a vast range of mountains, of which Djebel Bahkara and Djebel Bougareb are, I believe, the most lofty, the latter being of above 1300 metres in elevation. A furious wind assailed us in the gorges of these mountains, howling amidst the savage rocks, and at times almost sweeping us from our horses; added to which, the rain became hail, and galled us so severely, that we were several times compelled to halt, and turn our backs to it. It was now 4 p. m., and not an

Arab tent had we seen; not a morsel of anything except hail had entered our mouths since eight o'clock the evening before: moreover, one of my spahi's horses broke down with fatigue. I began to sing, with Falstaff,

"Would I were in an ale-house in London:
I would give all my fame for a pot of ale and safety."

We had passed upon the plains several remains of Roman forts, and here, amongst the mountains, they were still more numerous. I also observed two remarkable constructions, much resembling ancient Druidical altars, except that the sides were of squared hewn blocks: one vast fragment of rough rock covered the top. My spahis booked me as a fanatic, because, in spite of rain and wind, I halted to creep into these monuments of the Roumis of old. Stopping in one of these rather longer than usual, they hailed me, apologising for interrupting my devotions, but at the same time hinting, that whilst I prayed they were freezing.

About three leagues from Constantine we encountered an Arab, from whom I begged a handful of dates, part of his travelling-store; for I was excessively hungry; and, indeed, I devoured the dates with great *goût*, though hard as wood, and full of worms. From this spot we

beheld, some distance to our left, the remains of a Roman post, upon a height named Souma. The peculiar position of the fragments of this ruin renders it remarkable as a land-mark. The height it is upon is a shoulder of, I think, the Djebel Oum-Msetas, the elevation of which is about 1183 metres.

About eight o'clock we descended into the valley watered by the Bou-Marzeg, which has its confluence with the Oued Roumel, (the *Ampsaga* of the ancients,) about a mile south of Constantine. Soon afterwards, we reached the "El-Gautra" bridge, suspended over the fearful chasm in the rock, of seven hundred French feet in depth, which forms a natural moat to this extraordinarily-positioned city of Constantine.

I had left Bône, sirocco and sunshine prevailing. Here I am freezing; it is, indeed, full two months too late in the season to visit these mountain-regions. If the rain will but cease, I intend starting as soon as possible for Bêtna, on the route to the remote post of Biskra. It was prophesied at Bône that I should not be able to visit the latter French stronghold, the Arabs being reported to be in revolt: but as the soothsayers of the City of Jujebs were chiefly hotel-keepers, and interested in detaining me in their vampire clutches, I laughed them to scorn.

The weather is my only fear, but neither elements nor Arabs will keep me here long, for it is a sorrowful hole, with its steep and sombre streets. *Nous verrons.* There is a good saying: — *Qui se fait brebis, le loup le mange.*

Oct. 25*th.* — Long fasting, worm-eaten dates, and sudden change of climate produced disagreeable effects. Hardly had I reached the hotel at Constantine, than I was racked with severe illness. Retiring to my room, I spent the livelong night in alternate fits of intense pain and utter prostration. Dried dates eaten fasting often act thus, especially when washed down with water full of almost invisible leeches, as was my case.

27*th.* — Spent yesterday in recovering the effect of the dates, and in writing letters; *il ne faut pas laisser croître l'herbe dans le chemin de l'amitié.* Indeed, the weather was so disagreeable, and the fire so agreeable, that I felt far more disposed to spend my time in *writing* than in *running.* The scarcity of timber in this district may be judged of from the fact, that for four pieces of fire-wood of about a foot in length they demand the sum of three francs. This includes, however, the hotel-keeper's profit. As it is olive-wood, and exhales a pleasant perfume when burning, luxury is combined with comfort, which is a consolation to the needy traveller.

I am just now returned from breakfasting with General Bedeau, the commander-in-chief of this province. He appeared to me a man of profound understanding, united with great fluency in expressing his ideas. He is, indeed, generally admitted to be one of the most able men in the French possessions in Africa. General Bedeau and Marshal Bugeaud have run their course together; the former distinguished himself as lieutenant under the command of the latter at the siege of Saragossa.

General Bedeau informs me, that the reports of Arabs in the neighbourhood of Biskra being in revolt was not correct, though they are in an unsettled state, and likely to break out in rebellion; especially if Bou-Maza, who is hovering about the mountains, should show himself in arms. The general offered me a couple of spahis, and has courteously given me letters of authority for different Arab chiefs on the route, as well as despatches for General Herbillon, the commandant at Bêtna, and for M. St. Germain, the chief in command at Biskra.

The palace the general resides in was built by Achmed, the last bey of this city. It is a spacious and handsome specimen of Moorish architecture, with its marble pavements and cloistered courts, surrounded by extensive gal-

leries, upon which, as usual, the doors of the various apartments open. The walls of the vestibule of this building are ornamented, or rather disfigured, with Arabic frescoes, delineating, with a great contempt for perspective, Istamboul, Algiers, and numerous other seats of Islamism, together with sea-fights, and other emblems of oriental prowess, each with its Arabic inscription beneath. But let it be remarked, that the artist has strictly adhered to the law of Mahomet, for not a single human figure has been created by his orthodox brush.

Monsieur le Capitaine Espevine, the general's chef de l'état-major, rode round the city with me after breakfast, giving me most courteously much information which I could not otherwise have obtained, and showing me the most noted spots occupied during the siege under the Duc de Nemours in 1837, and the points where many a brave fellow fell beneath the fire kept up by the Kabyle and Turkish garrison.

The fate of Colonel Coombes (of the 47th Légion Etrangère) that day is a fine specimen of gallantry and discipline. Mortally wounded by two balls, one of which had traversed his body, he fought at the breach until assured of success; then marching tranquilly up to the general-in-chief, he rendered his account of the progress

of affairs, and exclaiming, "*Heureux ceux qui ne sont pas blessés mortellement, ils jouiront du triomphe!*" fell dead at the feet of the Duc de Nemours.

Upon the hill Coudiat-Aly, from whence the French batteries played upon the Bab-el-Djedid, on the western side of the city, is a pyramid erected to the memory of General Damrémont and other gallant officers who fell there. The former was killed by a cannon-ball just before the last final assault upon the breach close to the above gate. Let the brave mourn the brave, —of whatever nation,—foes or friends!

Bêtna, Nov. 4th.—

> "What a wild journey,
> Have I more wildly undertaken!
> How without counsel, care, fear, or reason."

At last, however, have I found shelter within the camp of Bêtna (this name signifies *repose*), after three days' and nights' exposure to snow, hail, and rain; and this without once changing my raiment, my little valise being filled with water. Winter still howls around me. The hydra-headed Djebel Aourês (the *Aurasius* of the ancients), and the cedar-clad Djebel Soultan, with its cloud-piercing peaks, are white with snow; whilst a cutting wind sweeps in furious blasts

the plain upon which this French post is situated. The elevation of Bêtna is said to be exactly that of the valley of Chamouni; and it is considerably greater than that of Constantine. The Peak of Tuggurt, the loftiest portion of Djebel Soultan, is the highest point in the province of Constantine. Through the courtesy of General Herbillon, the commander of this post, I am the occupant of a little room attached to his quarters.

I left Constantine about 7 a. m. on the 28th, with an escort of two spahis. Our first halt was about 10 a.m., at "Ain-el-Bey" a source of water clear and sweet. Here are steps and brickwork apparently of Turkish date; and nigh at hand are remains of a Roman fort. About 4 p.m. we reached the great plain of Ismoul or Bagla, rich in pasture, and covered with innumerable Arab herds.

An officer of engineers, an "employé civil," and five or six infantry soldiers, left Constantine with me, to meet upon this plain, near a spot named Ain-Feurchy, a surveying party from Setif, sent hither to fix upon the site for a future village. After passing numerous Arab douars, we at last descried the tents of this party. The temptation of more civilised companions than I could look for in an Arab douar, led me to

accept the polite invitation of these officers to abide here for the night.

The country we had traversed this day was (until arriving upon the borders of the above plain) of an undulating character, presenting a succession of hill and dale, totally unwooded, but very extensively cultivated for corn by the Arabs, who were now busy ploughing, it being the season of the "first rains," when they sow their wheat and beans. They are rather eccentric agriculturists according to our ideas; for they commence their preparations for sowing by running the plough round a given space, leaving a furrow; they then cast in the seed upon the rough space thus marked out, and then plough it; and marking out successive spots, sow and plough them in the same manner. Their ploughs are exceedingly light, with only one handle, and merely serve to scratch up the soil. If tufts of shrubby plants are in their way, they are far too indolent to pull them up, but merely run the plough round them. When a particular spot becomes too much overgrown, they shift the scene of action to another less so, for they have no land-marks to annoy them.

The vast plain of Ismoul is shut in on the East, West, and South by lofty limestone mountains, the summits of which are broken in forms

often bizarre enough. Successive convulsions of nature have displaced the rocks, the rushing winds have carried off the débris, and mantling turrets stand alone upon their lofty pedestals. Opposite our encampment to the East rose the vast mountain Guerioun, of the elevation of about 1700 metres, and presenting, on this side, an unbroken precipice from its summit to its base. The space between our encampment and this mountain was occupied by an extensive marsh, swarming with wild fowl of every description, especially Egyptian geese, the sculptured forms of which beautiful bird may be so often traced upon the obelisks and tombs which grace the shores of the river Nile. Swans, spoon-bills, and other wild fowl in countless myriads were there. The discordant voices of these tenants of the marsh filled the night-air, as, stretching ourselves upon the damp ground, we courted repose.

A more unhealthy spot upon which to establish a village could not well be chosen. That demon of Africa, that dwelleth in the marshes, *Malaria*, will carry off undoubtedly the first inhabitants planted there, and, in spite of *dessèchements*, must for many years decimate the population. However, there is fine pasture-ground, plenty of water, and no *palmier nain*. This is better

far, it must be admitted, for the poor colonist, than being located upon such arid spots as we find so often crowned by starving villages in the province of Algiers; the despairing tenants whereof, to slake their thirst, must toil a mile or two to reach a water-course, and then toil back again, cursing the sirocco, the burning sun, and his hectare of government concession, productive only of that cat-lived weed, the palmier nain. "*Mais revenons à nos moutons.*"

I had left Constantine without caring to supply myself with a tent, or any other provisions than a loaf of bread: but a Moorish boy who followed me boasted of three sticks and a rag; beneath which, with my spahis, I lay down, wrapped up in a burnoose, to sleep, our heads being beneath the rag, and our feet "sub jove frigido."

About midnight a tremendous rain commenced, accompanied with cold blasts of wind, so that we lay rolling in mud and water "in miserâ pœnâ." Finding sleep quite out of the question, and being no advocate under such circumstances of the

> "Languendo, gemendo,
> Et genuflectendo"

system, I arose from my watery couch, and

lighting, with infinite difficulty, my campaigning-pipe, sat down upon a saddle and longed for the day. One of the soldiers who came with us from Constantine was seized during the night with an access of fever: his ravings rode upon the wind with the cries of the wild fowl.

No "rosy-fingered morn" ushered in the following day, when, rising from our blankets of mud, we mounted our shivering and half-drowned steeds, and pursued our course, slowly and cautiously, towards the southern limits of the plain, which was now transformed to one vast sheet of mud and water, diversified by deep holes, into which our horses were continually floundering.

Drawing near a wretched douar, with the intention of getting some dry dates for breakfast, my horse fell with me into a siloe, which, having been opened and the corn withdrawn, was full of water, and not to be distinguished from the rest of the plain. Had it not been full of water, both my fate and his would have been more serious, for these siloes have more than once during night marches proved treacherous graves for the French soldier.

My star seemed clouded this morning, for, whilst sitting in this douar munching dates, my gun ac-

cidentally went off; singeing a graybeard's moustache, the charge passed between the legs of one of our horses tethered close to us, and lodged in the thick canvass of a tent opposite full of women and children: the whole douar was startled, but as I continued my date breakfast with great coolness, without even rising from the ground, and pronounced it merely *fantazia*, the Arabs arrived at the conclusion that it was a charge of powder fired to their honor, and, crying "Good, good!" rested content. Had I slain any one, my position would have been far from *good*.

Soon after this we arrived at the foot of the great mountain, called by the French from its form, the "Bec de l'Aigle;" and by the Arabs "Djebel Nefensser." Here is a very extensive Arab cemetery, telling fearful tales of the unwholesomeness of this locality. Amongst the many fresh graves, figured that of some lately defunct descendant of the prophet, his sanctity and high blood denoted by a green turban, placed upon the rough fragment of rock at the head of the grave; and his rank, by scarlet rags hung on some bushes stuck up at the foot.

There is, in this neighbourhood, a mountain named Djebel Harlouf, the *Hog* mountain. Upon my pointing towards it, and exclaiming *Harlouf*, an Arab (amongst several around me at the

time) imagined, I believe, that I called *him Hog*, instead of the mountain, and suddenly attacked me with a rather extraordinary weapon, viz., a cannon-ball, which he had picked up somewhere, and carried beneath his haïk. Seeing him in the act of hurling it at me, I dashed my spurs into my horse's flanks, and riding right at the fellow, knocked him down. The ball passed within an inch of its mark, as if projected from a catapult. Had it struck me, my wanderings would have terminated for a period, or perhaps for ever. As I galloped off to my spahis, who were some distance ahead, I looked round, and perceived my friend of the cannon-ball still sprawling on the ground.

It was our intention to reach the great tribe of the *Haractâs* that night. After passing between two salt lakes, divided by a muddy isthmus, and traversing another extensive plain, upon which we drank of a noted spring, named Ain-yac-coute (the Diamond Fountain), my spahis began anxiously to look out for the tents of the Haractâs, and I for a lentisk-bush, wherein to pass the night. Many a time have I spent night after night within a clump of this shrub, after clearing a space in the centre with my knife. Not a tent nor a lentisk-bush however was to be found here. Utter darkness set in, and we were

still wandering upon the plain, the rain falling in torrents, as it had done all the day. At last, altogether at a loss, we halted, and, sitting down upon the muddy ground to rest our tired horses, we imagined that all hope of shelter and cous-coussou was over for that night. Presently, however, one of our party observed the glimmer of an Arab fire in the distance, and, making for it, we arrived, after much floundering in holes and mires, at a douar of seven tents, where we lay that night. It was a most wretched, poverty-struck douar, the tents being full of large holes, and the ground beneath the canvass almost as wet as beyond it. The male tenants disturbed themselves little upon our arrival; but two or three women and girls paddled about in the dark and rain, tethering our unfortunate cattle, and bringing supplies of chopped straw for them. Sleep was denied us: for the cold wind, the drenched state of our raiment, and the herds of goats in the tents, totally forbad repose. For my part, I was unmercifully trampled upon all night during certain fierce contentions which took place amongst our four-footed companions; and, more than this, a huge Arab saddle, with a sabre attached, forming a portion of the barrier dividing us from the women of the tent, fell during the above contentions, upon my

head, as I lay upon my back, vainly endeavouring to doze. My struggles and shouts aroused the whole douar; for so sudden and unexpected was the descent, that I imagined there was treachery in the camp. When unsaddled, by aid of the Arabs around me, I found that I had escaped with a slight wound, the great shovel-stirrup having taken me exactly across the mouth and nose.

Within the neighbourhood of this douar there is a most remarkable monument, called by the French, the Tomb of Syphax, and by the Arabs, Medrashem. We were in the saddle again at half-after five on the following morning, and, much to the discontent of my spahis, I engaged an Arab to guide us to this sepulchral monument. It is of a circular form; the exterior built of finely-cut stones, of from three to four feet square. Where, from the ravages of time, or the vain attempts of the Arabs to effect an entrance, this exterior coating has been torn away, interior layers of much smaller stones are exposed. The circular base of this monument, the diameter of which may be forty or fifty feet, is ornamented with pilasters, with plain squared capitals, supporting a heavy cornice, which is perhaps twenty feet from the ground. Above this, the roof, formed of less massive

stones laid in regular gradations, runs up to a point. Upon the eastern facing of the base, there has evidently been a portico, but it is now nearly buried by the sands brought by the sirocco winds, as well as by the stones fallen from the monument itself. This monument is regarded with great superstition by the Arabs, who are fully convinced that it covers a vast treasure. Fraught with this idea, they have attacked it at different periods, and a certain bey of Constantine is said to have battered it with cannon; but all to no avail: so they have arrived at the conclusion that it is guarded by a powerful *Jin*, and that it is decreed that no mortal shall enter it.

Shaw considers that vast tomb, the *Kubber Romeah* or Tomb of the Christian Woman, near Algiers, to be of the date of the Numidian kings. This, therefore, which partakes of the same form, though more decorated, may be a work of the same period. As to its being the tomb of Syphax, it is not very probable; for that hero of antiquity, taken prisoner by the Roman Lelius some two thousand years back, died, as we know, in the royal prison at Alba, much to the dissatisfaction of Scipio Africanus, who intended the unfortunate captive to have graced his triumph. Such a monument might, however, have been

raised in Numidia to perpetuate the fame of that king.

About an hour after leaving Medrashem, we came upon a rich plain, and there beheld the numerous tents of the Haractâs, whom we had so vainly sought the night before. There were about three hundred tents, separated into douars of from ten to twenty each. The Sheikh did not receive his visitors very courteously; and instead of reading General Bedeau's letter, flung it on the ground. Finding afterwards that I was an Englishman, his manner changed immediately, and he commenced an infinity of questions regarding the comparative might of the French and English; enquired the age of the French Sultan, how long he would live, and the exact period at which he would die; as if he supposed me a seer of the first capacity. Hearing that I had visited Medrashem, he requested me to inform him whether it contained treasure, or a fountain; and if the former, how much; and if the latter, whether sweet or bitter; with a host of other absurd questions, all of which I answered with becoming gravity.

Before leaving this inquisitive sheikh, I presented him with a pair of scissors, upon which, calling the elders of the tribe around him, he with the utmost gravity trimmed their mous-

taches for them: then, as I opened my little knapsack to let some of the water out, he seized a tooth-brush, and after brushing his own beard, passed it round, to perform the same office to the greybeards around him. This compelled me to make him a present of that valuable article of toilet also. We parted excellent friends, and about half-past four I arrived at Bêtna, having traversed a hilly country, here and there slightly wooded, chiefly with stunted junipers. I observed remains of several Roman posts on the route, and remarked one especially, where numerous stone Roman coffins were exposed; some on the surface, others half-buried.

Upon the route from Constantine to Bêtna may be traced a Roman road, in some places very perfect. This was doubtless one of those great routes which, passing near the city Diana, now known as "Zanah," led from "Lambœsa" to "Sitifis" (Setif), and to "Cirta" (Constantine), from thence branching off to "Saldæ" (Bougie).

The ruins of Lambœsa lie about two leagues to the east of Bêtna. Yesterday I visited them with General Herbillon and several officers of his staff, escorted by a detachment of fifty dragoons. This ancient, and formerly magnificent city (from each of the forty gates of which, according to the Arabs, forty thousand horsemen

issued in the time of war), lies within a nook at the northern base of Djebel Aourês. The remains are very extensive: the most striking being those of a temple to Æsculapius, several gateways of three arches, and an amphitheatre. The inscriptions are without number, and beautifully chiselled; but in most cases half-buried in the débris, and in sand brought up by the desert-winds. An antiquary might spend half a century here with great profit. Upon one stone, around which lay broken masses of the frieze of a temple, might be observed, in extremely large characters, the name of Alexander Severus. Was it not under this emperor that a council was held at Lambœsa to condemn the heretic Privat—a council at which were present ninety bishops of the Christian Church?

During the fierce persecutions under Severus, Valerian, Galerius, and others, the blood of the martyrs flowed at Lambœsa; and the sanguinary edict issued from the palace of Diocletian, in Nicomedia, at the commencement of the fourth century, decreeing exile, outlaw, and extermination against the unhappy Christian, condemned to ruin many a noble building dedicated to the Cross, and many a collection of invaluable writings to the devouring flames; especially within the walls of this ancient city.

The troops at Bêtna amount at present to two thousand men, dwelling partly in tents, and partly in small barracks, built chiefly of the Roman remains brought from Lambœsa. The camp itself is square, enclosed by a slight fosse and earthern rampart. The spot first fixed upon for a camp in this neighbourhood by the expeditionary column led to Biskra in 1843, under the command of the Duc d'Aumale, was further to the west, near the base of Djebel Soultan; but the continued and fierce attacks of the neighbouring mountaineers made it necessary to choose a spot farther out on the plain, and out of shot of the covert clothing the base of the mountains.

These Kabaïles of the Djebel Aourês are a very peculiar race, being exceedingly fair, looking in fact more like Germans than Arabs. They speak the *Showiah* dialect of the ancient Berber language, and, like all the Djebalis, are both warlike and industrious. Such tribes of these mountaineers as are subdued by the French, General Herbillon assures me, pay their tribute far more certainly and regularly than the Arabs of the plain. This may be well understood; for the *latter*, nomad in habits, if ill-disposed to pay their tribute, can cut and run with their tents and Pænates upon alarm given of a column approaching to enforce payment; whereas

the daskhras of the Kabaïles are solid fixtures, surrounded with gardens well planted with fruit-trees. The son hopes to succeed the father in the same daskhra, to enjoy the shade and the fruits which his ancestors have enjoyed. In defence of their mud-habitations and their gardens, they therefore fight bravely; but once subdued, they prefer paying tribute until a chance of successful resistance offers itself, to inciting the destruction of their homes, their gardens, and their all. General Herbillon has had many a fierce struggle with these bold spirits of the mountains; but at present, those within the circuit of Bêtna are quiet.

As one regards these fair-faced gentry, he can but accept the supposition of their being descendants of sons of the North,—living tokens of that Vandal horde, which, in the early part of the fifth century, "urged onward by the hand of God," left devastated Spain in their rear, to carry fire and sword into the heart of the three Mauritanias, to found an empire within the fairest dominions of Rome, and to place kings upon the throne of Carthage.

There is said to be a forest of fine cedars on Djebel Soultan. Djebel Aourês abounds with walnut-trees, Spanish chesnuts, and other of the more hardy fruit-trees, on this, its northern

aspect; its southern vallies produce grapes, orange, lemon, peach, apricot, &c., &c., in great abundance, and of excellent quality.

Biskra, Nov. 11th.—But a few days back, the icy hand of winter was upon me. Now I wander amidst gardens red with the bright pimento, overshadowed by lofty palms loaded with rich clusters of dates!

"'Tis the clime of the East, 'tis the land of the sun!"

The oasis of Biskra is, indeed, a very grateful retreat at this season of the year, though in summer the temperature may be rather too high to be agreeable. At present, the thermometer stands at 25 centigrade in the shade. The doctor of the garrison told me that 45 cent. in the shade is the highest it has attained during his residence there of a year and a half. Others who have visited Biskra have pronounced. the heat as often far more intense at some periods.

I left Bêtna on the 5th instant, and not alone, having there met with a M. Maufle, ancient secretary of Marshal Bourmont, who commanded the French army upon its descent in 1830 upon the shores of Africa.

I had waited two or three days at Bêtna, General Herbillon having informed me that the

great Sheikh El-Arib would shortly arrive, being on his way from Constantine to his winter residence in the neighbourhood of the Zâab of Biskra. The principality of this noble Arab embraces three khalifats, extending over a portion of the Djebel Aourês, as well as a vast tract of the Sahara. He is the greatest sheikh in alliance with the French, and his riches are said to be enormous. About three days after we left Bêtna, he passed with his smala, consisting of numerous women and children, a thousand camels, together with a number of fine falcons and greyhounds. Numerous cavaliers escorted him, with much firing of guns and fantazia. Had I remained and travelled with him, as General Herbillon proposed, it would doubtless have proved highly interesting. But so cold and miserable did I find the climate of Bêtna, that loth as I might be to leave the courteous hospitality of the gallant general, yet was I glad enough to resume my saddle, thanking him most sincerely for having done all in his power to render his "place of repose" bearable to one who was dreaming of palm-groves and a hot sun.

It was about 11 a.m., then, that we commenced our journey southwards, with an escort of three spahis and six Arab goum. About

5 p.m., after considerable research, we found a little douar, having traversed an uninteresting and naked country. We were now on the plain *Merdjet-el-Ksour*, or Plain of the Castle; so named by the Arabs from ruins upon it, called *Ktar-el-Louz*, or the Fountain of the Almond-tree. This plain is about ten leagues from Bêtna, and five from El-Gantra. All the men of this douar were absent. But, at last, we won the hearts of the women so far as to prevail upon them to give up to us a large but very ragged tent, beneath which we established ourselves for the night, and just in time to escape a heavy rain. Towards midnight, some fifty Arab cavaliers, armed to the teeth, galloped up, to demand a night's shelter. They seemed very much inclined to take our tent by storm; but the sight of our spahis, and the letters we bore from the French powers, drove them, unwilling, to their saddles again. Giving the rein to their fiery war-horses, these gaunt warriors disappeared, shouting wildly as they plunged forward in the darkness.

After this disturbance, we reposed as well as we could, with at least a score of goats and kids in the same tent, together with a calf and numerous cocks and hens. The kids, as soon as dawn of day broke, commenced a system of gambolling,

chasing one another not only over the sleepers in the tent, but up and down the exterior of the tent, until, at last, one, by way of finale, fell through a hole in the canvass, putting a very summary end to my broken slumbers and his own untimely gaiety. My companion was far less annoyed by cold and kids than myself, as he boasted of an iron bedstead and a blanket.

Our horses fared but ill this night on rotten wild artichoke leaves, for the douar was wretchedly poor. They called themselves the Ben-Juraba. The little river El-Ksour, the waters of which are sweet, lay about a quarter of a mile to the West of this encampment.

On quitting the douar the following morning, we traversed the remainder of the plain, and then entered a route winding through a labyrinth of sterile and rugged mountains. Here and there strata of hard limestone, exposed, and highly polished by the weather, lay in our course, the traversing of which was attended with much danger both to horse and rider. Several mountain-streams crossed our course, the chief of which was the Oued-Fdala. The waters of the rivers this side of Bêtna flow towards the desert, it being an inclined plane from Bêtna southward; on the other side of Bêtna the waters flow north-

ward to the sea. The Sahara itself is said to be on a level with the Mediterranean.

The approach to the oasis of El-Gantra is remarkably striking.

Imagine yourself, after toiling two days across wide-spreading plains wholly devoid of trees, succeeded by a district of rugged mountains, more arid and chilling in their savage sterility and the death-like silence which reigns amongst them than even the plains themselves, their huge masses torn and overthrown by past convulsions of nature:—imagine yourself, I say, arriving suddenly at the base of a tremendous wall of rock, towering several thousand feet in air, and apparently barring all further progress; your first idea is that you are caught in a *cul-de-sac*, that your labours have only led you to the end of a giant's *impasse*. Such was my impression; but presently a long file of stately camels laden with dates from the Zâab of Tuggurt, issued forth as it were from the bowels of the imposing barrier; and turning a sharp mountain cape, we beheld a narrow breach of perhaps forty feet in width, through which rushes a mountain-torrent.

This is the *Calceus Herculis* of the ancients. Tradition says that that hero kicked the gap in the mountain with his heel. It is the gate of

the Sahara, or, as the Arabs call it, the *Mouth* of the Sahara. Through this remarkable passage the tribes of the Eastern Sahara pass and repass to and from Constantine with their long trains of camels laden with dates, haïks, and other produce of the desert and its inhabitants. The precipice on the right hand of the gorge, as you enter from Bêtna, is the abrupt western termination of the Djebel Aourês, and that on the left, the eastern face of Djebel Metlîli. A path cut in the face of the rocky wall of Djebel Metlîli leads to a beautiful Roman bridge of one arch thrown across the torrent below, the Oued-el-Gantra. Crossing this bridge, which is of massive hewn stone, and upon which are several Roman inscriptions, you find on the face of the opposite precipice another path of the same fashion. Beetling walls of rock, perfectly perpendicular, rise on either side, so lofty that the light of day hardly reaches the traveller as he threads the narrow passage. Suddenly a rich grove of palms, pomegranates, figs, and apricots, closing the southern entrance of the pass, arrest and delight eye. The murmuring Oued-el-Gantra rushes, as it were, joyfully, into the perfumed shade of this grove. Such is the approach to the oasis to which it gives its name.

The town of El-Gantra is enclosed by a wall

of bricks of mud mingled with chopped straw and palm-leaves, baked in the sun. At equal distances upon the wall are square watch-towers, built of the same material, and strengthened by rafters of palm-trees. Within the enceinte is the town itself, the houses of which are wholly constructed of the same material, the roofs being formed of palm-trunks laid lengthways, the interstices filled up with mud, and overlaid with the long fronds of the palm. The whole oasis inside of the wall is divided into innumerable small square enclosures, each one confined within its own mud-wall. The only means of entrance to these gardens is by a hole in the surrounding wall of each. To these holes a door is attached, constructed of palm-fronds, small palm-trunks, or a rough slab of stone; by pushing which aside, and going almost on hands and knees, one arrives at the interior. The Ouled Zaid inhabit this thoroughly African town. We bore letters for Sidi Mokaran, its venerable Caïd, who, sitting at the entrance of his house with several elders around him, after greeting us with the customary "Peace be unto you," showed us into a vestibule divided from his own private abode by a court. The roof of this vestibule was supported by square pillars of mud. Carpets and mats being placed upon the raised platform at

one end of the vestibule, we were soon at rest; as well as our steeds, which were tethered in the court, and supplied with barley and chopped straw. First a vast bunch of dates fresh from the tree, and then cous-coussou garnished with hard eggs, and a chicken laid on the top, all hotly peppered with powdered chilis, were set before us: next came a dish of an unleavened kind of pancake swimming in honey. The tearing of this to pieces with the fingers proving to us a difficult and unpleasant process, the old sheikh dipped his hands into the honey up to his wrists, fished out the large flakes of pancake, and rolling them up into balls, forced them into our mouths by turns;—an excess of hospitality for which we felt deeply indebted, but which we would gladly have dispensed with. A dish of vegetable-marrow stuffed with chopped meat, mingled with Indian corn, crushed dates, capsicums, and garlic, put the finishing stroke to our repast. Sidi Mokaran, tall in figure, but extremely thin from age, with a pale face, snow-white beard, finely-formed features, and most aristocratic hands, won our hearts with his mild and gentle manners, and his excellent fare. But one fault he had,—he snored terrifically in the night-season. To do us honour, the old chief, declining to leave our presence, sought repose

upon a narrow ledge in a niche in the wall of our apartment. No sooner were his aged eyes closed than he commenced an alarming prelude, and, after a few flourishes, M. Maufle took up the base in the first style. A most fearful nasal concert then ensued. Starting in desperation from my carpet one hour after midnight, I proclaimed it break of day, roused them from their slumbers, and ordered Akdar, our spahi, forthwith to saddle and be off; and bidding adieu to the sheikh, we rode forth from the door of his house, which opened on the exterior of the city-wall. The rest of our escort were, however, wrapped in sleep within the city; so we halted at the southern extremity of the oasis, whilst Akdar rode around the walls, breaking the stillness of night by shouting at the top of his voice, "Ali Ben-Hamed, the roumis await you!"

The moon rode brightly in the heavens; the dogs furiously bayed; and many an alarmed inmate of the city cried to the watchman in his tower, "Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night?" But before Ali Ben-Hamed came forth, two hours had passed over us, seated tranquilly upon an Arab tomb enjoying the peculiarity of the scene;—the tall palm-trees lighted up by the moon, and the gigantic Djebel Metlîli overhanging the oasis and

the mud-walled city of Sidi Mokaran. The oasis of El-Gantra may be compared to an emerald in an unworthy setting; — to a rich painting in a rough unornamented frame, rendering its beauty still more *éclatant*. A plain of arid sand and rubble, walled in by dark mountains, lies around it. Towards the north-western limit of this plain it is situated. The riches of this oasis consist of dates, capsicums, and chilis. As for the little barley grown there, it is not sufficient for home-consumption. The inhabitants manufacture tissues for haïks, but to no great extent. El-Gantra is the most northern point at which dates arrive to perfection. Traversing rocky hills and rugged basins, in the direction of the course of the Oued-el-Gantra, southward, we, in about two hours, halted on the summit of a hill, at a hot spring of very limpid water, presenting a surface of about thirty feet square, and a depth of from two to four. A marsh, abounding with a coarse knotty grass and innumerable frogs, lies around this spring. The nocturnal chant of these reptiles was far more agreeable than my campanion's late serenading. He had not yet discovered the trick I had had recourse to; and several times expressed his astonishment that there were no symptoms of sunrise. When I told him it was

not much past 2 o'clock, and explained the reason of his being there instead of slumbering by the side of the venerable Sidi, he enjoyed the joke with the greatest good humour.

Tradition assigns the baths we were now at, and which the Arabs call *El-Hammâm*, to the same hero of antiquity who kicked the gap in Djebel Metlîli. There are remains of Roman steps down to the water at the north-east corner. The night-air being cool, we rested some time here, enjoying the hot vapour from the water. One of our escort bathed in the spring, and said it was a sovereign remedy for all diseases. About an hour from hence we passed the base of a lofty mountain called the Salt Mountain, being wholly of rock-salt; and about 11 o'clock we entered upon the vast plain of El-Outaïa. Here is another mud-city on the banks of the Oued-el-Gantra, which now takes the name of Oued-el-Outaïa. This plain produces only corn, a little pasture, and numerous gazelles. It is seven leagues from El-Gantra. A vast number of tents were on the plain close to the town, and in one of them we reposed. About an hour to the South-east of this we passed between two lofty monticules, apparently artificial, and representing gigantic tumuli: near them were remains of a Roman station.

Arrived at the southern limit of the plain, we beheld from the summit of the rocky hills there bounding it, the wide-spread Sahara; and in the foreground, the palm-bearing Zâab of Biskra. The ancients have compared the Sahara to a tiger's skin, the oasises depicting the dark spots, and the intervening sands the lighter rays. The simile is happy enough, especially where the oasises are so clustered together as in the Zâab, or date-bearing district, of Biskra.

Biskra is overlooked on the North and East by the ranges of Djebel Aourês and Djebel Nemenchia; whilst to the North-west are those of Djebel-bou-Ghezal, Djebel Matraf, and Djebel Silga, the southern faces of which are in many parts perfectly white with the sand blown upon them by the desert-winds, to which they serve as barriers. Thus, looking at these mountains on their southern aspect you might suppose them enormous hills of sand; but their northern aspect is of dark limestone rock. Beyond Biskra to the South and South-west, the eye gazes, as far as the powers of vision will permit, over a wide expanse, boundless and unbroken. From the extreme whiteness of the sand in some parts, the beholder may imagine the scene diversified by vast lakes of water; but it is not so, a few salt-streams watering the oasises of the

Zâab supply the only water in those arid districts. The apparent lakes are nothing more than spots of the whitest sand. I myself at first supposed them to be nitrous exudations, if not water.

As we arrived at the outskirts of Biskra, we found barley a foot above the ground, and to be harvested in February; whereas one day's journey behind us the seed was not yet in the ground. Riding between mud-walls overshadowed by noble palms, we arrived presently at the French citadel, erected last year (1845), and wholly constructed of mud, palm-trunks, and cedar-wood. The latter is brought from Djebel Aourês. This citadel stands upon a mound in the centre of the oasis; but they talk of erecting a new one upon a rocky mount on the north-east side of the oasis, as the present position is too much imbedded in the palm-groves, which would afford excellent covert to an attacking force, and present a great obstacle to the sight.

M. St. Germain, the commandant of the garrison (which only consists of about five hundred men), received us with great courtesy, installing us in a room adjoining his own apartments.

In 1844, the first year of the occupation of Biskra, every officer of the garrison was massacred.

Some of the Ouled Naïl, then hovering in the neighbourhood, were admitted into the citadel by the treachery of the native troops in the French service. During the stillness of night, the yatagan fell upon the unsuspecting victims, sleeping their last sleep, dreaming of "la belle France." About a quarter of a mile to the East of the casbah, the palm-trees wave above a few simple stones, erected to the memory of these victims of a foul assassination.

It is surprising that so small a French garrison is posted here, considering the importance of this position, the gate of the Eastern Sahara and the Tell. It is a post ever exposed to attack, being on the limits of the French territory at the foot of the vast range of Djebel Aourês, the Kabaïles of which are not half subdued, and the desert stretching away to the south, from whence may appear, at any time, the Emir, or Bou-Maza, or some other hungry chief, with his flying forces. To obtain reinforcement when necessary, Bêtna, a four days' forced march, is looked to for troops, and those to be drawn from a camp of merely two thousand men. As for further reinforcement, Constantine must supply it; a four days' forced march from Bêtna. The mud-casbah of Biskra, in spite of the three or four miserable little guns mounted upon it, would fall an easy

prey, long before reinforcements could arrive. if the attack were led on with any sort of determination. That this would bring a heavy punishment afterwards upon the tribes in the neighbourhood, if they took part in the attack, or allowed the passage of hostile troops, is true enough; and the fear of that is all that restrains them. They only "bide their time."

We found numerous encampments of nomad Arabs around Biskra, subjects of the great Sheikh el-Arib, whose authority extends from the Djebel Aourês and Belezmah to Msilah and to Souf, on the south; and from the district of Tuggurt, to that of Agouath, east and west. It is from their commerce with the Tell that the inhabitants of the Sahara derive their subsistence. According to their proverb, "He is our father who is the master of our mother, and our mother is the Tell." The rich Zâab of Tuggurt, with all its dates and fabrics for haïks, would be in a very sorry state if it were deprived of its visits from the numerous northern as well as southern tribes, of which it is the annual rendezvous, and to the former of which it is indebted for grain, cheeses, wool, figs, horses, asses, arms, and a thousand other necessaries.

The water of the Oued Biskra, which flows to the East of the oasis, is turbid and salt. This is

all very well to irrigate palms and pastiques with — but

> "O for a bowl of fat Canary,
> Rich Palermo, sparkling Sherry!"

for it was never intended for man to drink of the waters of Oued Biskra! They have lately commenced here, however, an Artesian well: ten metres is the depth they have attained at present; another twelve is supposed necessary to bring them to the water. The difficulties of working it are considerable, the soil being of rubble, mingled with large stones.

They are not fortunate enough to have discovered here the Bahar-tâht-el-Erd, mentioned by Shaw, in these districts. The existence of such subterraneous water, however, is perfectly correct. In many districts of the Eastern Sahara, hardly any water is to be found on the surface of the soil. The inhabitants therefore sink pits, the sides of which are supported with palm-trunks as the work progresses. When the workmen arrive at a certain stratum of slate-like stone, they know that beneath this is the water. A workman then descends with a rope attached to his body, the end of which is held by those above. No sooner does he break through the stratum of slate than the water mounts with astonishing quickness, and his companions haul him up as speedily as pos-

sible: it every now and then happens, however, that the workman is drowned before he gains the surface. The water, now overflowing the pit, is directed throughout the oasis by numerous channels prepared for its reception. That the Romans discovered this subterraneous supply of water, is proved by several wells of Roman construction even now supplying the districts in which they are.

In the vast district of Oued-Mzâb, there are beds of rivers, and there the inhabitants dig their pits, and build huts and form plantations. If the rainy season in the neighbourhood of the sources of some of these occasional rivers is more abundant than usual, a rushing torrent inundates these dried-up watercourses; and great loss is sustained by those dwelling in them. Therefore, when a phenomenon of this kind is threatened, cavaliers depart in all haste towards the source of the river, and posting themselves at given distances apart, form a chain of observation, and as soon as the most distant perceives the approach of the body of water, he fires his gun, and each watchman repeating the signal, the warning quickly arrives at the spots in danger. All that is moveable is hastily carried off — the roaring flood arrives — the tops of the feathered palms are seen above the water — and the village is now

established upon the banks of a wide river; where perhaps twenty-four hours before, a dry, burnt-up desert surrounded it on all sides, without other vestige of water than such as was supplied by the pits.*

M. St. Germain tells me that the inhabitants of this oasis eat dogs'-flesh, like the Carthaginians of old. I understand, however, that they only take it medicinally, chiefly having recourse to such a *bonne-bouche* when suffering from fever.

I rode yesterday with M. St. Germain and several officers to some oasises in the neighbourhood of Biskra. There are not less than forty of these little verdant spots, each with its mud-village, in the Zâab of Biskra. The town of Biskra itself, the capital of the Zâab, contains about three thousand native inhabitants, who rejoice in the shade and dates of one hundred and fifteen thousand palm-trees.

In the evening the Commandant gave a *grande soirée*, the chiefs of the town being invited. The Caïd is a remarkably handsome man, and of most ancient and noble blood. He boasts, moreover,

* In the work published by the French government, and entitled "Exploration scientifique de l'Algérie pendant les années 1840, 1841, 1842," will be found much interesting information regarding these districts of the Sahara, and the phenomena here referred to.

of a harem of very beautiful women, and has a daughter, a pearl without price! a perfect houri! the very flower of the desert! — I trust she never dines on *dog!* Some of the chiefs played at écarté in the course of the evening; a sign of the progress of civilization imported by our Gallic neighbours into these remote districts of North Africa. Others played at drafts, smoked cigars, and drank lemonade and orgeat. These people apparently enjoy much such trifling *divertissements* as require no sort of corporeal exertion.

Just beyond the south-western walls of the citadel is a minaret of an ancient mosque. Around it are scattered numerous fragments of columns, evidently Roman: excepting these, I observed no Roman remains. In the town of El-Gantra are several slabs of stone with imperfect Latin inscriptions. At a short distance to the North of Biskra are hot springs, evidently resorted to as baths by the Romans. The waters of these springs produce remarkably fine petrifactions, and are of exceedingly high temperature. At the foot of the mount upon which the citadel of Biskra stands, and to the North-west of the mosque, are the officers' gardens; and an extremely pleasant resort it is. Some four or five acres of ground are enclosed by a mud wall; noble palms overshadow luxuriant chilis, capsi-

cums, millet, water-melons, and other vegetables; the ground being irrigated, as usual, by little channels carried round the trunk of each palm-tree, and branching off in every direction. We found the date-harvest almost over at Biskra, although at El-Gantra it had only just commenced. The palm bears a full crop about every second year, seeming to require repose during the intermediate years. The most choice dates come from *Oued-Souf*, to the south-east of Biskra: they are called *de-glet-en-nour* dates by the Arabs. The harvest of this fruit commences in these districts at the latter end of October. Before planting the palm, the extent of ground intended for cultivation is cleared as much as possible of the sand, and upon arriving at the sub-soil, deep holes are dug, and these being filled with manure, the young tree is put in. Tribes often make descents upon their neighbours about the time of date-harvest, and ravaging their crops, reduce them to the greatest misery.

The third day after our arrival at Biskra, we mounted our horses, in company with several officers, and with an escort of spahis and Arab goum, with the intention of visiting a neighbouring oasis, about eight leagues to the South-east of Biskra, called Sidi Ok'ba, after the Arab general of that name, a cotemporary of

the prophet. It was this Sidi, the ancient Arab historians say, who built the city afterwards named Cairouan, and, finding the intended site covered with brushwood affording covert to innumerable wild beasts addressed them in the following words: "I am the companion of the prophet, unto whom be all glory! I desire to build a town here, and it will be necessary to burn this brushwood, so I command you by the one great God to get out of it: therefore get out!" Upon this, the beasts issued forth, and retired towards the desert. This was about the year 51 of the Hegira (A.D. 671). The oasis we were now upon the point of visiting is extremely celebrated amongst the Moslems, as containing the tomb of this great military saint. There is moreover a tower there, which trembles visibly if one calls out "*Tizza bil ras Sidi Ok'ba*" (Shake for the head of Sidi Ok'ba). We were of course extremely anxious to visit this remarkably holy and curious sanctuary: but alas! we were doomed to disappointment; for hardly had we ridden three leagues, when an Arab on horseback, furiously galloping, met us with the news that certain neighbouring tribes were in revolt. Turning our horses heads and urging them to their full speed, we soon reached Biskra again, and within three hours after our

arrival, M. St. Germain sallied forth at the head of a column of four hundred infantry and five hundred Arab goum for the scene of action. I requested to accompany the column, but, not being allowed to do so without a written order from General Bedeau, I was obliged to remain behind.

I had intended to join some caravan, and proceed from Biskra to Tuggurt: but M. St. Germain courteously informed me, that if I insisted upon starting, without leave to do so from the commandant of the province, he would send me back to Constantine guarded by spahis; seeming to consider that he was answerable for my safety. Some time ago, a French merchant at Constantine, left that city for Tuggurt on a speculation without leave. General Bedeau despatched a party of spahis after him, who succeeded in arresting the poor adventurer, just as he had arrived on the borders of the oasis, and immediately hurried him back, before he could enjoy any fruits of his long and fatiguing journey.

Being left now almost alone at Biskra, we prepared to return to Constantine. The idea of thus plunging into winter again was so offensive to me, that I tried to make arrangements to remain at Biskra until the spring, but failed in doing so.

The day following our attempt to visit Sidi Ok'ba, we left Biskra for *Tolga*, an oasis twelve leagues south-west of the former place. A neighbouring caïd accompanied us, with twelve Arab cavaliers and a spahi or two, to insure our safety. We visited upon the route, the several oasises of Bouchagroun, Lichâna, Za'd'cha, and Farfar, all very similar in appearance to Biskra, and boasting of little but mud-towns and date-trees.

At Farfar, the Caïd of Tolga met us, with other cavaliers. This chieftain was a noble-looking man of about forty, and rode a most beautiful little mare of jet-black colour. Arriving within his domains, he led us into his house, and we were soon established upon a carpet within a very large square apartment, open to the heavens, and encircled by a colonnade of palm-trunks, supporting the massive mud walls. A head of dates was then laid before us, of the finest quality: then, having performed the customary ablutions before eating in a bowl of water handed round, a splendid repast was set before us, composed of pilau, rice mingled with sugar and milk, stewed cucumbers, a peculiar fricasee of chicken, other cucumbers stuffed with force-meat, cakes swimming in honey, and, to crown all, a most noble dish of excellent cous-

coussou. All these dishes were wonderfully hot with chilis and powdered capsicum. After dinner came coffee and pipes; the latter our own, the Caïd merely accepting a whiff as a compliment. Before wishing us good night, the Caïd wrote a note, which he desired us to give to an officer at Bêtna on our return. Numerous visitors poured in until past midnight; and wherever we had passed during the day, herds of little children followed us, with much laughter and many jests upon our appearance, for never, probably, had they seen Europeans before.

I saw at Tolga the largest scorpion I ever met with. It came forth from amongst a circle of our visitors, and with tail erect was marching off, when, to my astonishment, one of them threw off his slipper and killed the noxious reptile with his bare foot, though upon its first appearance all had fled in terror.

Tolga was laid almost in ruins by Abd-el-Kader in 1844. The Emir also cut a vast number of the palm-trees. They were now planting others. This oasis comprises three mud-towns, and its date-gardens are very extensive.

The ensuing morning we left Tolga at 4 o'clock, and, accompanied by the Caïd and fifteen cavaliers, reached El-Outaïa about mid-day. Upon the vast plain we saw great numbers of gazelles,

but so shy, that I could only get a long shot at one. The chieftains of these parts enjoy much the chase of these beautiful animals with greyhounds and falcons. The hawk they use is generally of a very small species, and comes chiefly, I believe, from the neighbourhood of Tunis.

The entrance to the chieftain's house at El-Outaïa was on the summit of a very lofty dunghill, the accumulation of ages: the ascent of its sides was difficult, and by no means agreeable. We intended to stop the night here, but found the perfume so strong, and the chief so sullen, that we decamped for El-Gantra, where we arrived in time for a grand fête. About midnight we honoured it with our presence. Sallying forth with the old chief, each bearing the dried frond of a palm-tree on fire, by way of flambeau, we presently arrived in a court where there was a huge fire of palm-branches. A circle of Arabs surrounded the court whilst about a dozen young men performed a dance in the centre, of the most savage nature; their movements consisting of vile contortions of the body, hopping on one leg, with yells and howls, as they twirled their old guns and blunderbusses in the air, or trailed them on the ground. Then with a wild shriek they would suddenly stop and fire a volley right

into the faces of the spectators, the tremendous charges of powder making a terrific noise, and echoing and re-echoing amidst the dark beetling crags of Djebel Metlîli. Then two girls appeared, laden with silver ornaments, but little dress besides; these performed a kind of waltz of a licentious character, like shy lovers approaching and again retiring one from the other, until at last becoming sufficiently intimate to venture upon an embrace. All this time women in the neighbouring houses were keeping up a wild offensive yell of *loo*, *loo*, *loo*, ringing in the air as if from some extraordinary instrument rather than human throats. Musicians sat near the fire adding to the clangour by scraping, blowing, and beating different barbarous instruments, begetting anything but music. We resumed our journey the next day, and proceeded by our former route to Bêtna and Constantine, where we arrived on the 17*th Nov.*, without any very remarkable incidents happening by the way.

Nov. 19*th.*—Left Constantine for Phillippeville about 9 a. m., a journey of between forty and fifty miles. I had never been this route, and requested from General Bedeau a spahi to guide me; but as I could not have one without waiting several days, I mounted my horse and sallied forth alone. It is a journey as well

made in company if possible, but not dangerous at this time, the Arabs of the neighbourhood being pretty quiet: yet isolated travellers are rather regarded by them as lawful victims, and several have been assassinated between these two towns. One of the latest victims was a Monsieur Guien, who, on the 14th of last month, was murdered on this route. This, according to the murderers, who were afterwards seized, was an act of revenge. Last year two Frenchmen were murdered on the same road, and three Arabs were executed as the perpetrators of the crime. Upon this the relations vowed revenge, saying "They have taken *three* Arabs for *two* French; one is therefore due to us." Guien was shortly afterwards found shot on the road-side; and one of the accused, Messaoud-Ben-Ali, turning evidence, said that "a short time before the murder he saw Ahmed (another accused) cut a cake of bread into pieces, and presenting it to those of his tribe around him, he exclaimed, '*Let us all eat of this bread, for this is the salt which binds us to revenge our slaughtered brothers:*' after which several of them withdrew to the road-side, and, concealed behind a cork-tree, let fly at the first Christian whose ill-fortune led him that way. Guien was on horseback, and leaving his dead body, the murderers retired with his horse, much delighted at their doughty deed.

My poor steed was in a very sorry plight, being worn to skin and bone by fatigue, exposure, and scanty fare. He was, moreover, heavily laden now, for besides my heavy gun, I had upon my back a faggot of palm-branches, to be polished for walking-sticks, and also a bag of six hundred francs in dollars; and these, with my saddle-bags, pistols, &c., were a heavy load for him.

About mid-day I arrived within a mile of Smendou, a French post, where are a few barracks, and a hut or two. Not wishing to enter this camp, as travellers on this route are in the habit of doing, I withdrew to a fine piece of turf on the banks of a clear stream, and tethering my horse by his halter to an oleander at hand, left him to feed at his ease with loosened girts, &c. Dipping my bread in the stream, I enjoyed the solitude and sunshine, and then resorting to my pipe, was in a perfect state of happy forgetfulness, when a rustling behind me made me seize my gun and jump to my feet. There stood within thirty yards of me a gaunt Arab. Not wishing a closer acquaintance, on account of my bag of dollars, I presented my gun at my visitor, and shouted in Arabic, "Run, O man! run!" He hesitated; but upon my moving a step towards him with my gun still presented, he took the hint, and obeyed my inhospitable order. Hardly had he disappeared,

when my horse, taking it into his head to roll on the ground, burst the bag of dollars. If my visitor had stopped to see the silver gushing forth, he would have been still more loath to depart. I was thankful he had not caught me asleep, as the temptation to cut my throat might have been too great to resist.

Towards nightfall I arrived at another French post, called El-Arouch, and there halted for the night in a most miserable auberge.

About 7 a. m. on the 20th I resumed my journey. It was a lovely morning, but my horse had fallen very lame; the only member of his body, indeed, which seemed to move with any facility, was his *tail*. The country was delightful. Wild olives, myrtle, and arbutus were grouped around; the streams ran merrily with most limpid water; the birds sang gaily and joyfully; whilst the air was perfumed with flowers: but how could I enjoy it? — my poor steed's sorry gait, and the delirium tremens which possessed his tail, robbed me of all tranquillity of mind.

The whole line of country from El-Arouch to Philippeville is rich and beautiful. Two leagues before arriving at the latter tour, the road winds amidst rocky hills covered with evergreens, beneath the shade of which flourishes the beautiful cyclamen, which in these climes takes the place

of the fair British primrose. Close around Phillippeville, on the land side, are fine rich pastures, —more fertile than healthy perhaps, but beautiful and refreshing to the eye.

I arrived just before the gates of the town closed. Several times I very much feared that I should be compelled to spend the night in the bush, my horse being almost at a standstill; but by dint of whip and spur I fortunately escaped this, and gladly retired to rest within walls. I was not happy enough, however, to have a quiet night's rest; for two rather severe shocks of earthquake set all the furniture dancing, and, aware of the frail construction of the French buildings here, I was almost tempted to wish myself away from brick and mortar.

I had intended to proceed by land from Phillippeville to Bône, a distance of sixty-eight miles; but my poor horse seeming not likely to survive the effects of his journey to Biskra, I sold him with his accoutrements for one hundred francs, and shortly afterwards reached Bône by steamer. Reports of serious disasters in the neighbourhood of Algiers from the inundations of the rivers reached me at Bône, and shortly afterwards that repeated shocks of earthquake had driven the inhabitants of Cherchell to fly from their houses and encamp in the country around.

My journey to Biskra had proved interesting, but fatiguing on account of the very unpropitious weather. The traveller is always liable to encounter such little *contretemps*. My motto in such cases is

" Hæc olim meminisse juvabit."

THE END.

LONDON:
SPOTTISWOODE and SHAW,
New-street-Square.

JUN 16 1959